

Midwest Folklore

WINTER, 1956

Published by
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PROFESSOR STITH THOMPSON

Volume Six of *Midwest Folklore* is dedicated to Professor Stith Thompson who retired from his duties as Distinguished Service Professor of English and Folklore at Indiana University at the end of the academic year 1954-55.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

WATER-WITCHING IN CENTRAL ILLINOIS BY WARREN S. WALKER	197
SOME SINHALESE PROVERBS FROM CEYLON BY S. A. WIJAYATILAKE AND G. H. SIMON	205
FOLK FESTIVALS IN INDIA BY SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA	221
THEY WALKED BY NIGHT BY E. G. ROGERS	229
OHIO VALLEY BALLADS	233
"A VERY CURIOUS AND PAINSTAKING PERSON" ROBERT GRAVES AS MYTHOGRAPHER BY HERBERT WEISINGER	235
BOOK REVIEWS	245

Mody C. Boatright, Wilson M. Hudson, and Allen Maxwell, *Texas Folk and Folklore* reviewed by Richard M. Dorson. Thomas J. Dimsdale and E. DeGolyer, *The Vigilantes of Montana*, reviewed by Howard W. Troyer. Robert L. Ramsay, *The Place Names of Franklin County, Missouri*, reviewed by James B. McMillan. Ewan MacColl, *The Shuttle and the Cage*; Ewan MacColl, *Personal Choice*; Ewan MacColl, *Fourpence a Day and Other British Industrial Folk Songs*, three records reviewed by John Greenway. Halsey Stevens, *The Life and Music of Bela Bartok*, reviewed by Bruno Nettl. Ed McCurdy, Jack Elliott, and Oscar Brand, *Bad Men and Heroes*, reviewed by Tristram P. Coffin. Brief Notices of Erik Dal, *Nordisk folkevisesforskning siden 1800*; Niles Schiörring, *Selma Nielsens Viser*; Louise Storm Borchgrevink, *Fraa ei anna tid*; Roger Pinon, *Le Conte merveilleux comme sujet d'Études*; and Charles Joisten, *Contes et Chansons folkloriques des Hautes-Alpes* reviewed by W. Edson Richmond.

Information, see page 204

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WATER-WITCHING IN CENTRAL ILLINOIS

BY WARREN S. WALKER

Blackburn College

Carlinville, Illinois

Whether the study of water-witching lies properly in the area of folklore may justly be questioned. Different groups of observers have claimed it for geology, hydrology, psychology, parapsychology, and religion. I place it in the realm of folklore not in refutation of any of these claims but simply because it is a practice perpetuated by the oral or folk tradition. Although there is at least one long shelf full of literature on the subject, virtually all of it is scholarly or pseudo-scholarly analysis of "witching," "divining," or "dowsing," as it is variously called, and not instruction for those actively engaged in the practice. No one, to my knowledge, who is alleged to have the ability to discover water in this manner derived his know-how from printed sources. As a folklorist, I am under no obligation to make value judgments, and so there is no attempt to "prove" or "disprove" the validity of the claims of witches or their supporters.¹ I am interested, rather, in classifying and summarizing over two hundred statements about water-witching made to me during the past two years by informants in Central Illinois.²

Divining is not a native American folkway but one imported from Europe where it has been known in one form or another since the fifteenth century. Barrett and Besterman, in the most thorough work on the subject, trace the tradition as it developed in Germany, France, Belgium, England, and finally the United States from 1430 to our own time.³ The earliest reports of divining on record concern not only the discovery of water but the search for metals, the first full treatment of it appearing in 1546 in Georgius Agricola's *De Re Metallica*. The first water witching occurred in 17th century France, where it was literally identified with witchcraft, early practitioners of the art being charged with sorcery. If water has come to be the primary quest of diviners, it should be noted that rhabdomancy—the technical term for the attempt to discover something by means of wands or rods—has always been used, throughout its known history, for many other purposes such as detecting criminals, discovering buried treasure, identifying diseased parts of the body, and predicting the sex of unborn children.⁴ Even in our own day, the novelist and historian Kenneth Roberts reports that his friend Henry Gross (probably the best known dowser now alive) can always tell how many

people are present in a building that he approaches simply by consulting his rod.⁵ As recently as January, 1954, the Associated Press carried an account of an offer made by Bill Youngs, a British dowser, to try to find a wrist-watch lost on the royal estate at Sandringham by Queen Elizabeth. The offer was accepted, though the results of his effort have not been revealed. Although nothing of quite such dramatic nature has been described to me in Central Illinois, there are several reports of divining that do not involve water.

Water is my primary concern here, just as water was the concern, in a far more vital way, of many of my informants. Since 1953 this part of the state has been in the depths of a cyclic drought pattern. Resulting agricultural losses in Macoupin County alone ran to more than \$7,000,000 in 1954, and the lack of water for human and animal consumption has given rise to a whole new business: water hauling. In some cases, water has had to be trucked from reservoirs and creeks from as far away as twenty miles. The constant and almost universal preoccupation with the drought clearly made the past two years an opportune time to collect water lore of all kinds.

METHODS OF WATER-WITCHING

There are a number of accepted ways of divining in common use today, but not all of these are employed in Central Illinois. None of my informants was acquainted with the pendulum as an instrument of divining, though it is a popular piece of equipment for water witches in England, and it is a favorite device of amateur exponents of ESP in this country. When finding water is the objective, the pendulum usually consists of a wooden ball, an inch or two in diameter, suspended by a fine cord from a short wand in such a way that it can swing freely. Any pendulous action is taken to indicate the presence of underground water, the amount and depth of which is revealed to the initiate by the pattern that the ball describes. According to some ESP students, a needle hanging from a thread over someone's open palm will swing back and forth if the person is male, in a circle if the person is female.

A long straight wand is mentioned frequently as part of a dowser's apparatus, though its function here is quite different from that attributed to it elsewhere. (I leave to those better qualified on the subject the problem of the relationship, if any, between these wands and those used from early times by prophets, priests, and magicians, including Moses and the forest kings of Nemi from whom, according to Frazer, Vergil borrowed the golden bough to protect his Aeneas.) In other parts of the country dowsers stake out well-sites

at places where their wands dip violently from a horizontal position. On December 12, 1954, to cite one notable example, the *New York Sunday News* carried a full-page story about Carol Terbush, a thirteen-year-old farm girl from Onida, South Dakota, whose wand wielding was so successful that she had been officially recognized and employed by the state's drought-plagued Department of Game, Fish, and Parks. In Central Illinois, the wand plays a secondary role. Once water has been detected by other means, the wand—it is called a "whip" here—is used solely for determining the level of the water. The whip will jerk downward a number of times, each dip representing a spatial unit of from one to six feet, varying with the dowser. The total number of dips multiplied by the increment tells the dowser the exact depth at which water will be found.

The most common American method of witching, and the one with marked predominance in Central Illinois, employs the familiar forked branch. Although willow seems to be the wood preferred in most areas, it takes second place here to peach. Then come cherry, elm, and apple, in that order. Whatever the wood, it must be green, and the bark must be left on, in contrast to the treatment of magician's wands, which are usually peeled. The dowser holds the forked ends out at arm's length, one prong in each hand, and bends them outward laterally and slightly upward, keeping the single end pointed up in the air. Some dowsers grasp the fork so that the backs of the hands are toward the body while others reverse the position; the important thing is that he grip it as tightly as possible. He then walks slowly over the area where water is sought until the vertical prong pulls down. The amount of water beneath the surface there is in direct proportion to the strength of the downward thrust. A particularly abundant supply may pull hard enough to twist the bark off the forked end of the stick, if the witcher can hold it tightly enough. Sometimes the skin on the dowser's hands gives way before the bark does. Dowsers almost always speak of water as flowing in underground streams, and so they work back and forth across a field, charting their progress and marking pull points, in order to find spots at which two or more streams converge. It is at such confluences that dowsers are willing to risk their reputations with definite predictions.

In the annals of rhabdomanancy appear accounts of divining performed without any wand or fork but with bare hands. A muscular or nervous reaction in the hands, when held flat with fingers spread and palms down, informs the dowser of the presence of water. There were only three reports to me of this kind of dowsing in Central Illinois.

A small but rapidly increasing group of dowzers derive their information about the whereabouts of water by still another means: metal rods. The kind of apparatus employed by these dowzers is also used by a great many plumbers and engineers—one of the largest engineering firms in the state lists it as standard equipment—for locating buried water-bearing pipes, especially mains and sewers. The rods are L-shaped and are made of either steel or brass, more often the former. Some rod operators work with a single rod, but most prefer one for each hand. Sometimes the rods are simply and inexpensively constructed, pieces of hay wire or form wire, for example, bent to an L shape, but just as often they are the products of careful craftsmanship. Many are fitted with handles into which the ends of the L's are inserted, the handles or parts of the handles acting as bearings to reduce friction. The rods, like the other instruments of the art, are held at arm's length, with the free end of the L pointed straight ahead of the dowser. When either an underground stream or a buried water pipe is crossed, the free leg of each L swings laterally to form a straight line parallel to the flow of the water. None of my informants attributed to metal-rod dowzers the ability to determine either the amount of water available at a given spot, or the depth at which it will be found.

FOLK EXPLANATIONS OF WATER-WITCHING

When asked to explain the physical principles that lay behind water-witching, the causes for wand dipping, people were generally less positive and less communicative than they were about the methods or the result of the art. Farmers, often desperate for water until they hired witchers, generally took a pragmatically grateful view. "I don't know how it works," one of them said, "but if it gets water, it's the real thing." Some shied away from any explanation, as if any attempt to provide one would be tampering with questions not meant for human deliberation. One man said vaguely, "There were soothsayers in the Bible, you know . . ." and left it at that. Despite the hesitation of people to commit themselves, enough of them answered to show a few popular theories about dowsing.

Almost all folk explanations assume some special quality, physical, mental or spiritual, in the dowser. Some people have this quality and some don't. Whatever it is, it seems to run in families and be heritable. The ability is not, so far as I could discover, associated in Central Illinois with any racial, national, or cultural differences, nor with any particular body type or peculiarity of physique.

Although my data show men outnumbering women ten to one, there is no sex line drawn; the predominance of male dowzers seems to result from the circumstances that make such problems as well-digging and water supply the concern of the male world. Although there seems to be no age minimum for dowsing, most of the practitioners about whom I have been told are advanced in years and considered to be "old" by the informants. Several reports indicated that the mysterious quality was transferrable by bodily contact, but only for the duration of contact. One of the uninitiated trying in vain to make a wand dip over a pull point might be immediately successful if the witch simply touched his arm or placed a hand on his shoulder, but he himself did not thereby become a witch.

The most common notion among the less educated informants about the source of a witcher's power was that he had body magnetism or body electricity. Those whose bodies magnetized watches and made them unusable were almost certain to be adept at divining. Just why this physical condition should make a wand dip over water was not explained. Informants with more than a secondary school education generally scorned this theory and often credited the dowser with extra-sensory perception; to them he was "psychic" or "clairvoyant." Among informants in the professional and business group, several took the view of Steinbeck's observer in *East of Eden*. The dowser was one who had the instinctive capacity to detect water in much the way an animal could "smell" it. Or, the dowser had, over a number of years of preoccupation with water, acquired a subconscious or intuitive knowledge about the kind of terrain most likely to have springs near the surface. In either case, the action of the wand or rod was caused by an involuntary muscular movement dictated by some sixth sense when the dowser passed over water.⁶

PREVALENCE OF FOLK BELIEF IN WATER-WITCHING

Except for the attempt to interview people of every educational level, there was no effort to be selective in the choice of my informants. They constitute a fairly random sample of the population in Central Illinois, and as such provide a reasonably reliable index of the popular opinion about water-witching in this area. Over 75% of the farmers interviewed by me or by my students either believed firmly in the practice or insisted that it "worked," whether or not they actually "believed" in it. Of the professional and business people among my informants, primarily from Macoupin County, over half were convinced that "there's something to it." The telling evidence with many of this group, which had had less first-hand experience

with problems of water supply, was the fact that almost all of the well drillers and well diggers of the county are either dowzers themselves or follow the advice of dowzers about where to sink shafts. Would those who stand to lose so much by pursuing a false lead be likely year after year to mistake an illusion for a practical measure? Hardly! It would be possible, I think, to demonstrate conclusively that a majority of the people in these central counties give full credence to the ability of witchers to find water.

If there are as many failures as successes in choosing sites for good wells, one does not hear of them. In only one of the great many cases reported to me had a dowser's predictions proven completely incorrect. Occasionally dowzers are slightly mistaken about the depth at which water will be struck or the number of gallons per minute that the vein will supply, but report has it that they can always find water if there is water to be found. Frequently dowzers succeed where engineers and hydrologists had failed. In the folk tradition here, confidence in the uncanny ability of witchers is firmly established, and an illustration of this confidence serves as a fitting conclusion to this study.

Some years ago the grandfather of one of my informants purchased a piece of land in St. Clair County and promptly took the next logical step for a landholder—looked for water on it. A witcher was brought in who made a thorough study of the farm and finally hit upon the most likely spot for a well. He estimated that a plentiful supply of water would be struck at a depth of sixty-nine feet. Digging began and proceeded foot by foot without incident and without water. When the workers had reached a level sixty-eight feet below the surface, all digging stopped, and the spades, picks, bars, and scoops were hoisted out of the shaft to allow room for the masons to work. Without a drop of water yet evident in the well, the masons set about building a brick wall as a casing, so confident were they of the accuracy of the witcher. It was a standard well, seven feet in diameter, and the investment in bricks was not inconsiderable. When the casing was completed, one of the diggers was again lowered. With a sledge hammer and bar he drove through the last foot of rock and brought in a gushing stream of water that would have made all work in the shaft impossible had they waited until then to build. The well filled to within a few feet of the surface and provided an apparently limitless supply of water during the family's stay at that farm.

NOTES

¹ Documentation for an article of this type is doubly difficult: the names and addresses alone of all the informants would fill several pages; many of the letters and interviews were confidential. I do feel a scholarly obligation, however, to cite my sources, and I shall be happy to provide a mimeographed list of most of my informants to anyone interested, withholding only the names of those who requested anonymity.

² "Central Illinois" is here used to refer to that part of the state south of Chicago and north of Mount Vernon, the bulk of my material coming from the following counties: Calhoun, Cass, Cole, Cumberland, Douglas, Henry, Jersey, Macoupin, Montgomery, Pike, Sangamon, St. Clair, and Washington. The people of these counties are predominantly farmers, but I do not wish to imply that beyond their agricultural pursuits they have enough in common to constitute a separate and homogeneous unit. The term "Central Illinois," then, is geographical and not cultural.

³ Barrett, W. F., and Besterman, T. *The Divining Rod* (London: Methuen and Company, 1926.) For additional accounts favorable to the validity of water-witching, see papers by Barrett and others in *Proceedings of the Society of Psychic Research*; for the most thorough antipathetic study, see A. J. Ellis, *The Divining Rod: A History of Water Witching* (U. S. Geological Survey. Water Supply Paper 416, Washington, 1947.)

⁴ Elizabeth A. McMahon, "A Review of the Evidence for Dowsing," *The Journal of Parapsychology*, II (September, 1947), 175-190.

⁵ Kenneth Roberts, *Henry Gross and His Dowsing Rod* (Doubleday: New York, 1953,) p. 97.

⁶ Dr. Joseph B. Rhine, dean of ESP students in this country, was most helpful while I was engaged in this research, sending me materials to which I had no other means of access. His interest in the subject is strictly that of a scientist; however, the controlled experiment rather than the oral tradition provides him with data.

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Manuscripts submitted for publication should be typed double-spaced on 8½ x 11 paper; footnotes should be typed double-spaced with a triple space between each note at the end of the article. Titles of books and journals should be italicized; titles of articles, chapters of books, poems, reports, etc., should be placed in quotation marks. A style sheet is available on request.

SOME SINHALESE PROVERBS FROM CEYLON

By S. A. WIJAYATILAKE AND G. H. SIMON

Kandy, Ceylon

Tucson, Arizona

This paper was begun in Ceylon and completed in the United States; in its later stages, its authors have worked together by mail. The proverbs are from a collection of folklore material made by Gwladys Simon in 1951-1953, in Ceylon, (via U. S. State Department, Smith-Mundt Grant) while superintendent of a system of women's agricultural schools, Ceylon Department of Agriculture. The paper was put together by Mrs. Simon; she has made a few comments in footnotes (7, 28, 29) and mentioned some variants of proverbs. All the work of transliterating and translating the original Sinhalese manuscripts was done by S. A. Wijayatilake of Kandy, Ceylon; all the informational background was supplied by Mr. Wijayatilake; the discussion is his, and the folk verses were quoted by him. Mr. Wijayatilake, a Sinhalese, is Principal of Dharmaraja College, a large Buddhist school in Kandy.

These proverbs are from students at Walpita Girls' Farm School at Kotadeniyawa, Ceylon. These young women are Sinhalese villagers who know only a few words of English; their age range is from seventeen to twenty-two years. Contributors are Miss D. P. Ranasinghe, proverbs 1 to 27; Miss Kusumuvati, proverbs 27 to 36; Miss Sita Athulathmudali, 23, 24, 47 to 50; Miss Dhanavati Manike Jayasundera, 37, 38, 39, 46. In the folklore-collecting project, Miss C. Goonesekera, head of the Walpita school, and Miss Vas Gunsekera, Lecturer in Animal Husbandry, were especially helpful.

In a letter to Mrs. Simon, Mr. Wijayatilake has made some pertinent remarks about Sinhalese proverbs: "Re your query as to whether expressions beginning with the word 'like' may justifiably be included among proverbs, I would mention that in Sinhalese speech, proverbial expressions are almost invariably introduced by way of illustration of a point, and hence as similes, naturally beginning with 'like.' It does not follow that *all* similes are proverbs, or that *all* proverbs are introduced as similes; but the vast majority of proverbs are so introduced. Your example 'as black as pitch' is a simile but not a proverbial one. Your other example 'As the stork waited for the pond to dry up' is a proverbial one. In Dickens's *Pickwick Papers*, Sam Weller is addicted to the mannerism of capping nearly all his observations with ingenious similes. These, though Dickens's own inventions, or borrowed by him from the speech of some London cabby or other acquaintance of his, may well pass into pro-

verbs. The boundary between a true proverb or apophthegm and a proverbial phrase or simile is sometimes very fine, almost imperceptible. If by 'proverb' one understands only pithy summarizations of moral wisdom, perhaps a large number of Sinhalese proverbs should have to be excluded; but if one uses the word to embrace expressions that, perhaps originating from isolated incidents, have passed into the common speech of a race, I think most Sinhalese proverbs should find a place among them."

1. *Akamaeththen dhoon kaehma vageyi.*

Like the food given grudgingly.

This is based, no doubt, on the belief among the Sinhalese that where one's host has dispensed hospitality grudgingly, the food will disagree with the guests and cause indigestion or other gastric trouble.

2. *Angooleh ranga dhaenenneh paedhdha kalhee gangehyah.*

The true character of the double-canoe is known only when it is rowed out on the river.

Angoola is the double-canoe, i.e., two dugouts lashed together with cross bars, on top of which is a platform for the transport of passengers or goods; in rare cases, it has a thatched roof. They are very common on rivers in Ceylon.¹

3. *Attikkah gaheh mal pipoonahyi kivva vageyi.*

Like the one who said that the fig tree had blossomed.

Attikkah is the fig tree [bot. *Ficus glomerata*], which produces fruit but no flowers. This is said of a patent absurdity or falsehood.

4. *Atha vaenoovoth kata vananta pooloovani.*

If you move [use] the hand, you can move [use] the mouth.

This is a very common proverb. It means that if you work, you can eat, i.e., earn your livelihood.

5. *Athi pandithayahta ehdhanden yanta baeriloo.*

They say that the man of excessive learning cannot cross a tree trunk footbridge [across a stream].

This means that men of excessive academic learning are often inclined to be impractical. It is probably based on a story. The man of much learning may probably have begun to argue on the probable strength of the bridge, or he may have stopped to consider which foot he must place first on the bridge, and so forth. Thus he either never crossed the bridge or, in trying to do so, in his vacillating way, he fell into the stream. This proverb is still in common use on Sinhalese lips.

6. *Atheh naethnam moohdhen ethara thiboonath ekayi.*

If it is not in one's hand, it might as well be across the sea.

This means almost the same as the English "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." If a desired thing is not in one's possession, it is immaterial whether it is near or far.

7. *Andhayahta mona gini hooldha?*

Of what use are torches to the blind man?

This is said of an inappropriate or futile action. It is similar to the English "Casting pearls before swine."²

8. *Beeri aliyahtha vehnah gayannahseh.*

Like playing lyres or harps to the deaf elephant.³

This is said of an ineffectual action. It is like the English "Casting pearls before swine." It is used especially where the person it is sought to influence remains obdurate. For example, giving good counsel to a completely stubborn and wayward child.

9. *Andhareh lindhata paennah vageyi.*

Like the way Andare jumped into the well.

This alludes to a well-known anecdote about Andare, the famous Court Jester of a Sinhalese king. One night Andare returned home very late, after revelling either at Court or in the company of his boon companions, and knocked on the door for admittance. Andare's wife, sulky, and furious at his late arrival, would not answer. Andare, pretending to be indignant and desperate, shouted that if his wife remained obdurate, he would commit suicide and jump into the well in the house compound. He picked up a large stone, such as are often placed near wells for washing linen on, and dropped it into the well. The loud splash alarmed Andare's wife; she promptly opened the door and rushed to the well, probably with a rope with which to haul up her gallivanting spouse. Meanwhile, Andare, who had been hiding in the dark under the eaves of the house, slipped into the house and shut the door on his wife; and she had to beg to be admitted. This proverb is probably used to describe a stratagem.

10. *Andhareh seeni kaehva vageyi.*

Like the way Andare ate sugar.⁴

This proverb, based on one of the innumerable anecdotes about Andare, the Court Jester of the Sinhalese king at Kandy, is used to describe an artifice or stratagem. One day Andare, entering the Palace, saw a large quantity of sugar laid out in the courtyard in the sun, on mats, to dry. Pretending ignorance, Andare asked the King what this strange material was. The King jokingly, but with a serious air, told Andare it was a special kind of sand with which the royal courtyard was being strewn. Andare, leaving the Palace immediately, returned soon after with his son, both wailing and beating their breasts. Andare, finished actor that he was, told the King that his (Andare's) father had just died. He started vigorously and avidly eating up the sugar, professing to scatter handfuls of sand on his head as a sign of mourning and

lamentation. His son followed suit. The King's household was the poorer by quite a quantity of sugar. Thus Andare turned the King's joke upon the King himself. Many such pranks are attributed to Andare.⁵

11. *"Anna sathah, menna polla. Mama sil. Samahdhan velahyayi,"
minihek keevaloo.*

"There is the serpent, here is the stick. I am observing a religious retreat," said a certain man.⁶

A man who had taken the eight vows of abstinence (*ata sil*), one of which is the vow to abstain from killing, noticed in the neighborhood a venomous serpent. As he was under the religious vow, he would not, or could not, kill the serpent himself; but being eager to have it got rid of, he tells another person nearby, "There's the snake, here's the stick. Now kill it. I can't kill it because I am under these vows." This proverb, still common, is used in criticism of hypocritical and pharisaic people who follow the outward forms rather than the spirit of religion. It may have originated from an actual incident.

12. *Amma ateh haendha thibehnam dharoovah badaginneh inneh
naethiloo.*

They say that while the mother has the ladle in her hand, the children will never starve.

This proverb refers to mother love. As long as there's a scrap of food in the house, a mother will starve rather than starve her children. The *haendha* here is the *ladle*, made of a shallow cup-shaped portion of coconut shell fitted with a wooden handle. The word for spoons, such as are used at table, is also *haendha*. But in the Sinhalese village home the latter would be rare, if used at all.⁷

13. *Amoo kala kenek amoo genayath, vee kala kenek vee genayath.*
Who sowed *amoo* will reap *amoo*, who sowed rice will reap rice.⁸

This means that the consequence must be closely related to, and determined by, the cause. You reap what you sow; you can't sow tares and reap wheat. You can't do evil, and expect good to result. This is based on the doctrine of Karma. *Amoo* or *amu* is a subtropical grain-producing plant [bot. *Paspalum scrobiculatum*]. In *A Textbook of Botany* by Pulimood and Joshua fourth edition, (Colombo, 1948), p. 391, it is said, "The grains contain traces of poison and should be washed well."

14. *Amoona kaedoona dhavasata naethi naehyoh koomatadha?*

Of what avail [are] the relations who are not at hand [to assist one] the day that one's irrigation dam gave way?

The Sinhalese peasant depends for the success of his agricultural efforts almost exclusively on the proper maintenance of the complicated irrigation system, consisting of lakelike tanks, rivers, streams, artificial channels, etc. The collapse of an irrigation dam (say across a stream) would be to him a major disaster. He would expect all his friends and relations to help repair the dam. If they did not turn up then, of what use their turning

up on less urgent occasions? Compare the English proverb: "A friend in need is a friend indeed." *Amoona* in the above proverb is the irrigation dam, thrown across a waterway to raise the water level and create a reservoir, from which narrow channels would lead the water to the fields.

15. *Ambalama kaedoonahtha gavva kotavehdha?*

Just because the wayside resting pavilion has collapsed and is no more, does the league become shorter in distance?⁹

This is almost as if one said that whether there were milestones or not on the roadside, a mile is a mile. In the olden days there were *ambalams* or wayfarers' resting pavilions built by the roadside every four miles. Such a four-mile stage is called, in Sinhalese, a *gavva*, which is approximately a league. Even today many such *ambalams* still exist, especially at road junctions, although now, owing to the motorization of transport, they no longer serve the original purpose, except perhaps to beggars, vagrants, and just a handful of pedestrians. They were originally built, whether by kings, nobles, or villagers, purely as a pious duty; for both in Buddhism and in Hinduism, the duty of digging wells, planting shade trees, building and repairing roads and bridges, and providing travelers' resting pavilions, is emphasized. The proverb suggests that the essential or intrinsic character of things remains, even though the external symbols or indications are not present.

16. *Aengilleh tharamata idhimoovaganna.*

Let the swelling of your finger be proportionate to the size of your finger.¹⁰

This is a slightly distorted form of the common proverb *Aengilleh tharamataloo idhimilla*, i.e., *they say that the swelling of one's [injured] finger must be proportionate to the size of the finger*. This proverb is quoted sarcastically when one becomes overweening and puts on airs or becomes too ostentatious. It is somewhat analagous to the English "Cut your coat according to the cloth."¹¹

17. *Vakkadeh hakoороо haengoovah vageyi.*

Like the one who hid jaggery in the irrigation outlet in the field.¹²

A friend has given a variant and better form: *Pihilleh hakoороо haengoovah vageyi*, i.e., *Like the one who hid jaggery in the roof gutter*. The irrigation outlet in a field is hardly a place where one would naturally hide anything, jaggery or aught else. But in the typical Kandyan cottage, if it is of a considerable size, there are several ridged roofs, and where two roof slopes form a valley, there is, at the bottom of the valley, a gutter made of a *kithool* trunk (*kitul* palm tree) split in two longitudinally and with the soft pulpy inside scooped out. Even today such roof gutters made of the *kithool* trunk are not uncommon in Kandyan villages. A foolish peasant woman is not at all unlikely to hide jaggery (so that the children may not get at it) in the roof gutter, forgetting that if or when it rains, the jaggery will dissolve in the rain water carried along the gutter. This proverb is used of a patently stupid action.

18. *Madeh sitavapoo inna vageh.*

Like a stake planted in the mire.

This means that it is unstable. This proverbial simile is very common, and is derisively applied to a person who is vacillating and who blows hot and cold, or is unreliable. To some extent, we may compare it with the English expression "Sitting on the fence."

19. *Panina rilavoonta iniman bandhinnah vageh.*

Like tying up [setting up] ladders for leaping monkeys
[monkeys well able to leap, or skilled in leaping].

This is said of an ill-advised action, as where one encourages evildoers, captious critics, undisciplined persons, etc. It always emphasizes not only superfluous but ill-advised action.¹³

20. *Gaha dhannah ayata kola kadah pahnnah vageh.*

Like plucking and showing [for recognition] the leaves to one who is familiar with the tree [itself].¹⁴

This is said of a superfluous and foolish action. It is like the English "To teach one's grandmother to suck eggs" or "Teach your father to get children."

21. *Gangen dhiya bee moohoodhata ahvadannah vageyi.*

Like blessing and praising the sea after having quenched one's thirst with water from the river.¹⁵

This proverb is used in commenting on ungrateful people who, having benefited from some, forget the fact and go fawning on others. For example, a politician may rise to power on the votes of a certain section of the public but, having got himself elected, may turn his back on them and throw his lot with others who are thought to be more influential.

22. *Oroova peraledhdhee thambi dhoomkoodoo iroovahseh.*

Like the way the Moorman went on inhaling snuff while the boat [in which he was] was capsizing.

This is said of an unreasonable action by someone living in a fools' paradise, of an act of foolish complacency. It is exactly analagous to the English "To fiddle while Rome is burning."

23. *Paeni varakahvatath hena vadhinavahloo.*

They say that lightning strikes even the jak tree yielding treacly-sweet fruit.¹⁶

The meaning probably is that death, disaster, danger, are no respecter of persons. Contrast the English "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." *Paeni varakah* means the treacly-sweet ripe fruit of the jak tree [bot. *Artocarpus integrifolia*.] Of the normal jak tree, the ripe fruit is called *vaela*; the fleshy perianth surrounding each singleseeded achene becomes very soft and almost unpleasantly glutinous. There are, however, certain jak trees, normal in other respects, which produce ripe fruit called *varakah* of a different character;

in them the fleshy perianth surrounding each single-seeded achene remains, even when quite ripe, very firm and non-glutinous. The scent, too, of *varakah* is less overpowering than that of *vaela*.

24. *Yoodhdheta naethi kadoova kos kotantadha?*

The sword that is not unsheathed in battle, is it then meant for chopping jak fruit [as if it were a kitchen utensil]?¹⁷

This proverb means that everyone and everything has a specific purpose to fulfill; if the purpose is not fulfilled, all else is valueless. A sword is meant for use on a battlefield, not in the kitchen as a chopper. One's courage and talent must be applied properly.¹⁸

25. *Kaehi gaehni dhee hotoo gaehni gaththah vaeniya.*

Like giving the cough-ridden woman and taking the snotty woman in exchange.

This is said of a bad bargain. A peasant, sick and tired of his wife's [or mistress's] never-ending cough, may return her to her parents and take in exchange perhaps her younger sister or another as wife. He may find that the new wife, if free from coughing bouts, has a running nose all the time.

26. *Aereha dheegch sevanaellath aedhaloo.*

They say that where a marriage is breaking up, even the shadow of the unwanted spouse is crooked.¹⁹

27. *Natanta baeroovah novehyi poloveh aedha.*

Not that one can't dance, but that the floor is crooked [uneven].²⁰

This proverb is quoted derisively when a person, instead of frankly confessing lack of skill to do something, foolishly tries to save face by finding fault with extraneous things. For instance, a bad dancer might criticize the stage. Compare the English proverb: "Tis a bad carpenter that blames his tools."

28. *Haedhena gahah dhpetthen dhaeneh.*

The plant that is likely to flourish is recognized from its two cotyledons.²¹

This means that from signs observable in early childhood, one can guess how a person will shape in later life. Identical in meaning with the English proverb "The child is father of the man."

29. *Rathran indhikatoovenooth ridhenavahloo.*

Being pricked, one is hurt, even though the needle be of red gold.²²

The proverb means that elemental things don't lose their significance, although accidental things, such as social status, whether one's own or of those one deals with, may differ. This obviously is based on the Sinhalese custom of ear-boring. Girls, when they are very young, say a year or two in age, have their ear lobes bored so that they may later wear ear rings or

ear drops. The boring was usually carried out by an elderly woman of the village reputed to be a lucky and benevolently disposed person, using a golden needle. In the case of very poor people, the thorn of a lime tree is used in place of a needle. Whether the child's ear lobe is pricked with a golden needle or with a lime tree's thorn, the pain felt will be equally real. The lime tree's thorn is used, probably, owing to its antiseptic properties.

30. *Avalakshana gaehneegeh patheevratahva vageyi.*

Like the ugly woman's chastity.

This is almost exactly analagous to the English expression "Sour grapes." The proverb is based on the assumption, perhaps uncharitable, that the ugly woman remains chaste not because she desires to be so, but because no man thinks it worth his while to seduce her. Proverbs like this suggest that although Easterners make much boast of the chastity of Eastern women, beautiful women, whether Eastern or Western, it is said, have seldom had chastity as their strong point. "To make a virtue of necessity" would be the best English parallel to the proverb.

31. *Hekhoo-hahmy oonath vehla kanta naethnam mokatadha?*

Even though one's name be Fortune, of what avail is it if one is too penurious to buy oneself a single meal?

The proverb is based on the literal meaning of the proper name *Hekhoo-hahmy*. *Hekhoo* means *luck*, *good fortune*. *Hahmy* means *Mister*. Therefore *Hekhoo-hahmy* means *Mr. Fortune* or *Mr. Lucky*. The proverb suggests that such externals and accidentals as names are inconsequential. A parallel in English would be "What's in a name? A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." In contrast is the English proverb "Names and natures do often agree."

32. *Nama Kapoorohahmy oonath mokatadha kata gandhanam?*

What boots it to be named Mr. Camphor if one's mouth stinks?

Here too the literal meaning of words is pressed into service. *Kapooroo* means *camphor*; and camphor is sweet-smelling. The significance of this proverb is identical with that in 31.

33. *Katin bathala, vaththeh vaelakvath naehhaeh.*

[He] keeps mouthing about [his] sweet potato [plantation] [but] in [his] garden [is] not even a single [sweet potato] creeper.

The meaning is that some boastful folk promise much but perform little. In the English, "One acre of performance is worth twenty of the Land of Promise." There is also the Sinhalese proverb *Kathahva dholahven, gamana payin*, *Talks about riding in a litter [palanquin], but goes on foot.*

34. *Kiri kalayak dhohlah goma bindhoovak moosoo kalah vageyi.*

Like drawing a pitcherful of milk and mixing with it a pinch of cow dung.

This means to mar something done well and with great effort by some little carelessness, stinginess, etc., towards the end. To a limited extent, the

same thought is in the English proverb "To lose or spoil the ship for a half-pennyworth of tar." Of course, the Sinhalese proverb is capable of wider application. "Like the cow that gives a good pail of milk, and then kicks it over."

35. *"Yanneh kohehdha" kiyah aehoovahma "malleh pol" keevah vageh.*

Like the man who, when he was asked "Where are you going?" said, "[I have] coconuts in my sack."

This very common proverb is used to comment derisively on an utterly irrelevant remark or reply. It is probably based on a folk story.

36. *Kiri erentath andanta ohnaehloo.*

They say that even for the mother's breasts to start secreting milk, the baby must cry.

This is generally used to mean that nothing worth getting can be got without effort. For example, folk say that the government will never provide all the amenities it should, unless public opinion agitates for them.

37. *Aevilena ginnata pidhooroo dhamannah vagehya.*

Like throwing [fresh] straw on the blazing fire.²³

This means to make matters worse, to aggravate or make confusion worse confounded.

38. *Ekka kathath bokka venayi.*

Although they eat together, their stomachs are separate.

Notice here, as in many Sinhalese proverbs, the jingle *ekka*, which means *together*, and *bokka*, which means *stomach*. The literal meaning is that although a company of people sit together and eat the same food, the stomachs don't digest together. Similar proverbs are "One man's meat is another man's poison" and "*Quot homines, tot sententiae*." Different minds may react differently to the same thing.

39. *Vahsanah vanthayahgeh bamareh vaelleth kaerakeyi.*

The lucky person's top spins even in the sand.²⁴

When one's luck is in, everything one puts one's hand to shapes well.²⁵

40. *Kata aethi poothath roova aethi dhoovath thanahganda ohnaeh.*
One should rear the son with the gift of the gab and the daughter with the gift of beauty.

A common and universal desire of the Sinhalese parent is expressed here. A son endowed with "the gift of the gab" will be able to make a mark in professional or public life or in commerce; a daughter endowed with beauty will not be a drug in the marriage market.

41. *Galen pattah gannavah vagehyi.*

Like trying to peel off bark from a rock.

It is very difficult, almost impossible. For example, it is difficult to get help or sympathy from an utterly selfish, cruel man.

42. *Nodhanna Dhemaleta gihin varigeth nasah gaththahloo.*

They say that [the blacksmith in the story], in trying to speak the Tamil which he did not know, destroyed himself and his entire family line.²⁶

This is exactly analogous to the English "A little learning is a dangerous thing; Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring," by Alexander Pope. The story is as follows: A certain Tamil hunter brought his muzzle-loading gun to a Sinhalese blacksmith for professional attention. The gun, which was loaded, had jammed, and the Tamil hunter, both by word and gesture, communicated to the blacksmith this fact and his wish to have the gun put to rights and the load carefully extracted. The Sinhalese blacksmith, a conceited fellow, having just two or three words of Tamil, assumed an all-knowing air, and, even before his customer had finished explaining the position, repeatedly remarked, "*Namakoo theriyen, namakoo theriyen*" (i.e., I know all about it, I know). Holding the gun by the muzzle end, he started heating the trigger portion over the blazing fire in his forge. There soon ensued a loud explosion, and the learned blacksmith was blown to bits. Being a bachelor and an only child, in killing himself, he destroyed his entire family line.

43. *Haendhinogah ooyana hodhdhath nogahah hadhena lamayath eka vagehyi.*

The soup that is made without stirring and the child that is reared without thrashing are alike.

In Sinhalese kitchens, the stirring of the soup or curry is done with a ladle made of a shallow cup-shaped section of the thicker end of a coconut shell fitted with a handle about fifteen inches long, made of the woody portion of an areca nut trunk. Two holes are pierced in the side of the shell, to fit the handle on.

44. *Vadhina vadhina hena Lankahthilaketa.*

Each time there's lightning, it strikes Lankahthilaka.

The allusion is obvious.²⁷ Lankahthilaka is the name of a medieval Buddhist temple still existing in almost its pristine beauty at a place called Gadaladheniya. The name means the *ornament of Ceylon*. Leaving Kandy for Colombo, past Peradeniya, before you get to Kadugannawa, you see a road branching off to your left, with a signboard marked "To Panideniya." A few miles along that road is the temple, highly ornamented, pure white, on the crest of a hill, visible from far around. It is possible that lightning frequently struck the fane, exposed and elevated as it was, and probably surmounted with a metal finial. There is also a great temple of the Buddha in Polonnarova, a now ruined city which in the twelfth century was a Sinhalese royal capital. It is a ruined building now, tall and gaunt, with two mighty, dilapidated entrance towers. It is just possible, but not probable, the proverb refers to that temple.

45. *Amoothoo bath dheema atha aelleemen dhaeneh.*

One's host's hospitality (or lack of it) is gauged from the way he holds one's arm.

This proverb relates to the common practice of Sinhalese hosts who, in order to detain to dinner or other meals, a guest who is rising to leave, hold him by the arm and attempt to restrain him from leaving before the meal. The host who is insincere pretends, in the conventional manner, to restrain the guest, but he holds the guest's arm at the elbow, so that the guest can easily slip out of the hold.

46. *Amoorthaya voovath pramahnayata vadah hondha naethiloo.*

It is said that even nectar, taken in excess, is not good.

This proverb cautions us to be moderate in everything. Compare it with the English "Too much of one thing is good for nothing;" "Too much of aught is good for nought;" "Too much pudding will choke a dog." Compare it with the Latin *Medio tutus ibis*.

47. *Parangiyah Kohtteh giyah vageyi.*

Like how the Portuguese went to Kotte.

The meaning is "in a circuitous course" or "in a round about way." This proverb is based on a well-established tradition as to the trick played by the Sinhalese upon the Portuguese invaders when they first came to Ceylon.²⁸ At that time, 1505 A.D., the Sinhalese King, Vira Parakrama Bahu VIII, had his capital at Kotte, about six miles inland from Colombo. The Portuguese envoys, after landing in Colombo, desired to be taken to meet the King. The Sinhalese guides, not wishing the Portuguese to know that Kotte was so near to Colombo, and desiring to give the Portuguese an exaggerated impression of the largeness of the king's territory, led the Portuguese envoys all over the country, for many miles, to Kotte. By that time the envoys were sick and tired of their interminable journey. Ever since, we have this expression (in the proverb) which expresses a circuitous method of doing or saying something.

48. *Kapanna baeri atha simbinnah vageyi.*

Like kissing the hand that one cannot cut off.

This proverb is quoted when one, though heartily keen on hurting an antagonist, rival, unsympathetic employer, etc., finds that circumstances won't permit one to do so, and therefore pretends affection and gentleness. Where force is out of the question, one resorts to diplomacy. Like the English proverb "Discretion is the better part of valor."

49. *Gangata ini kaepoovah (kapannah) vageyi.*

Like cutting off branches from a tree for use as fence posts and letting them drop into the river below.

This is said of a futile and foolish action. A foolish peasant is described as climbing a riverside tree for branches to use as fence stakes; instead of cutting them off and throwing them on to land, he lets them drop into the river, which sweeps them along.

50. *Semarah valgaya ahrakshah karanna vageyi.*

Like the yak jealously guarding its tail.

Semarah is the yak, a long-haired Tibetan ox. The beautiful silky tail of the yak, cured and fastened to an ornamental handle, was a prized article in the courts of Indian, Sinhalese and other Asian kings, and also in the temples of the gods. It was used, usually by ladies-in-waiting or by temple servers, as a fly whisk. You may have noticed two of them fitted to the sides of the head of the Daladah Mahligahva tusker (elephant) carrying the sacred relic casket at the Kandy Esala Perahera.²⁹ The yak tail fly whisk is regularly mentioned in classical Sinhalese poetry in descriptions of Court scenes. Among the Sinhalese there is a rooted belief that the yak is so proud and fond of his beautiful tail that he guards it very carefully, sometimes risking his life rather than lose his tail. This proverb is quoted when something is very painstakingly valued and guarded. For example, the Sinhalese would expect a maiden to preserve her chastity and virginity as the yak guards his tail.

NOTES

¹ The proverb is one line from a verse occurring in Sinhalese folk ethical poetry.

Angooleh ranga dhaenenneh paedhdha kala gangehyah
Nangooleh ranga dhaenenneh vela madehyah
Oogooleh ranga dhaenenneh asoovoona thaenehyah
Mangooleh ranga dhaenenneh dhoohpooth laeboo thaenehyah

The character of the double-canoe is known only when it is rowed out on the river;

The character of the plough is known only when it is driven over the muddied field;

The character of the trap is known only when one is caught in it;

The character of married life is known only when one has begotten sons and daughters.

² As a child, Mr. Wijayatilake read in a Sinhalese school reader, a story about a blind man who at night always carried a torch or flambeau. When questioned derisively by wayfarers why he did such a foolish thing, this man said that he knew the way all right without the help of the torch, but he carried it lest people endowed with sight carelessly bang into him. Other proverbs appear to be variants of this one. "Of what use to a blind man is the light of a lantern?" "Of what use is a mirror to a blind man?" "To the blind man the crystal and the diamond are the same." These were reported by a number of people.

³ Similar proverbs reported a number of times were "Like playing a *chank* to a deaf man;" "It is like playing the *veena* to a deaf man." One contributor compared the proverb with the English "Like pouring water on to a duck's back."

⁴ A variant was phrased "Like Andare eating sand."

⁵ The story of Andare and the sugar was probably reported to Mrs. Simon more often than any other story. In one version, Andare wept for his wife; in another, for his son. Mr. H. L. Perera of Colombo said that Andare's behavior was due to his wish to exasperate the Queen. According to this information, Andare habitually plagued the Queen, and the Queen hated him. The Queen told Andare that the sugar was sand.

⁶ A variant states "There is the animal."

⁷ Villagers generally eat their rice and curry with their fingers, using large banana leaves as plates.

⁸ Two variants mention *kurakkan*, a kind of millet, instead of rice.

Amoo vapoora koorahan labahganna baeriya.

Having sown *amoo* seeds, you cannot expect a harvest of *koorakkan*.

Amoo vapoora koorahan labahganta baeriya.

It is impossible, having sown *amoo*, to reap *koorakkan*.

Another version is "You cannot sow *kurakkan* and obtain *amoo* (*amu*)."
Amoo is cultivated as food by poor peasants but its grain is not prized like that of rice, or even as much as that of *kurakkan*.

⁹ Variants are very similar. For example, "Will the way become shorter if you break down the roadside resthouse;" "Will the *gavva* become less when the *ambalam* is destroyed?"

¹⁰ This proverb too was reported many times, with a number of variants: "The finger must be swollen according to its girth." (The equivalent was said to be "Pride goeth before destruction.") "The swelling ought to be in proportion to the finger." ("Some people exaggerate problems.") "The finger, even if it swells, will not be bigger than the hand." ("A man cannot become great by bragging.") A proverb said to be related is "Do not put your finger into a ring that is smaller than the girth of your finger."

¹¹ From the *Pragnaloka*, p. 174, this folk ethical verse is quoted:

Godaelleh tharama dhaenagena lindha hapanoo

Boraelleh tharama dhaenagena ooda paninoo

Kadoolleh tharama dhaenagena vaeta bandhinoo

Thamoonneh tharama dhaenagena kal harinoo.

Having regard to the height of the mound, dig the well;

Having regard to the gravelly surface of the ground, jump up;

Having regard to the height of the stile, build the fence;

Having regard to your own condition [in life], spend your days.

¹² A variant supplied by Miss Athulathmudali is this:

Vakkadeh hakooro haengoovah vageyi.

Like the man who hid his jaggery in the water outlet

[left in the ridges of paddy fields].

Jaggery, which is palm sugar in lumps, is easily soluble in water. The proverb is quoted when someone does something particularly silly. An irrigation outlet, called a *vakkade*, is a small gap, usually only a few inches across; it is left in the ridge of a paddy field so that water from one division of the field may be led into another.

¹³ From p. 174 of *Pragnaloka*, this related folk verse is quoted.

Nahina dhehina kahleta pin kerooma yootha

Vahina kalata koorin vil valin etha

Basina dhiyen dhohthah mooth gathoth aetha

Panina rilavoonta iniman kamak naetha.

In times of death and disaster it behooves one to do meritorious deeds;

In times of rain little fishes come out of the pools;

From flowing water it would suffice even if one took but a handful;

To leaping monkeys ladders are of no use.

¹⁴ A variant is "What is the use of showing the leaves to one who knows the tree?"

¹⁵ A variant for this is "Like one who quenches his thirst in a stream and wishes long life to the ocean."

A folk (ethical) verse may be quoted from the *Pragnaloka*, p. 176.

Dhookata pihita sooloo minisoongen vithara

Lokoovata sitina ayagen naetha kisima vara

Thibahata vathoora beemata sooloo lindha vithara
Kisi vita piluta naethi gaembooraethi maha sayoora.

Line 2: Never from the high and the mighty is to be expected

Line 1: Such help and consolation in moments of suffering as from ordinary folk;

Line 4: Never is the deep and unreasonable ocean such a source of help;

Line 3: As the tiny well when one desires to drink water to quench one's thirst.

¹⁶ This proverb occurs in a line from a folk (ethical) verse from the *Pragnaloka*, p. 174.

Ran vimaneh sitimooth dhooka naethi vedhdha?
Paeni meeyeh kaehmooth badagini naedhdha?
Mini baranin saedhoomooth gatha, nodhiradhdha?
Paeni varakah gasatath hena novadhidhdha?

Though one dwelt in a golden palace, would pain and grief cease to be?

Though one feasted on a honeycomb, would one's hunger disappear?

Though decked out with gems and ornaments, would the human body not decay?

Does not lightning strike even the tree yielding treacle-sweet jak fruit?

¹⁷ A variant given by Miss Athulathmudali is very similar.

Yoodhayata naethi kaga kos kopantadha?
 Of what avail to fight when you are feeble and nerveless?
 used for cutting jak fruit?

¹⁸ The proverb is found in a line of a folk verse.

Aesa naethi dhah potha gaththeh kiyantadha?
Dhatha naethi dhah ook dhandoo gini thapintadha?
Vera naethi dhah gahagaththeh dhinantadha?
Yoodha aethi dhah naethi kaga kos kotantadha?

Of what avail to take out a book when you are [old and] blind? How can you read it?

Of what avail is sugar cane when you are toothless?

Are you going to feed the fire with it and bask in its heat?

Of what avail to fight when you are feeble and nerveless?

How can you hope to win?

Of what avail [is] the sword that serves not in battle?

Is it to be used for chopping jak fruit [in the kitchen]?

¹⁹ This subject is treated in a folk (ethical) verse.

Saethapoona namooth indhithi garoo thapasoon vahgeh
Rasa dhoonnath kiyathi vasa dhoonnah vahgeh
Moka keevath gasathi gaetayak gala vahgeh
Sevanaellath aedhaloo haeralah yana dheegeh.

Though reclining in bed, he [or she] remains [passionless] like some venerable ascetic;

Though served delicious food, he [or she] makes [cutting] remarks as if given poison;

Whatever the remark made [to him or her], he [or she] makes some brusque retort harsh and hard as stone;

Even the shadow, they say, [of the unwanted spouse] is crooked [appears crooked to the spouse seeking release] where the union is breaking up.

This verse illustrates the Sinhalese folk's psychological insight into the nature of marriage.

²⁰ There seem to be a number of variations of this proverb: "It seems he cannot dance because the ground is crooked"; "The ground is rough and so he cannot dance"; "I cannot dance because the ground is uneven."

²¹ From the *Pragnaloka*, p. 185, there is an appropriate stanza belonging to the folk ethical poetry.

Kiyana kalata keevath kelesinehyah
Karana kala nosaroo saroo bava dhanehyah
Igenagaenooma vaeda valadhee penehyah
Haedhena gaha dhepaeththehdhee penehyah.

At the talking stage in whatever way one talks,
 At the doing stage will be revealed the unfruitful
 or the fruitful nature [of the talking];
 One's learning will be seen in the way one does
 one's work;
 The plant likely to thrive will be recognized by
 its two cotyledons.

²² A common variant is "Even the prick of a gold needle will pain."

²³ A variant is "Don't add hay to a burning fire."

²⁴ A variant is "The rich man's top will turn (or spin) even in the sand."

²⁵ Mr. Wijayatilake says, "In my childhood days, boys, both in town and country, (especially in the country) made tops out of chunks of green wood which they whittled into shape with pocket knives, fastening a headless nail at the bottom end to serve as its one leg. At the flattish top end was left a round crest. In wrapping the cord round the top, this crest was used to secure one end of the cord loosely. Top spinning used to be a seasonal sport. Today, at least in the towns, it has died out. In the shops at Christmas there are (even in my childhood there were) the German metal-made musical tops. In the small toy shops of Matale, my birthplace, imported wooden tops of the same pattern as the tops made by boys, but elegantly finished, grooved for the string, and lacquered at the top, used to be sold. To understand the proverb, one should remember that the top will spin only on hard ground."

²⁶ A variant is "Don't wipe out your kin by talking Tamil you don't know." The Sinhalese, described as "An Aryan race speaking an Aryan language," are said to have come to Ceylon from northern India, about 500 B.C. Tamils from southern India, speaking Tamil, "a Dravidian tongue," came to Ceylon in a long series of invasions; the Mahawansa, historical chronicle of Ceylon, names Tamil kings of Ceylon, along with the list of Sinhalese rulers. Two thirds of Ceylon's present population (more than eight million people) are said to be Sinhalese; one tenth are Tamils. Although today resemblances between the two groups are greater than their differences, and there has been much intermarriage, there are still many areas in which the two groups live separately; the languages are very different; and the majority of people know only their own language.

²⁷ Mr. Wijayatilake had not heard this proverb before.

²⁸ For almost five centuries, Ceylon has been dominated by Europeans. The Portuguese came in 1505; the Dutch displaced the Portuguese in 1658; the British drove out the Dutch in 1796. Ceylon became a British Crown Colony in 1802, and a self-governing British Dominion in 1948. English has been the official language, until recently; upper classes and white collar workers speak English; but many villagers and rural people still know only their own language, Sinhalese or Tamil.

²⁹ *Peraheras* are processions which include elephants; they are a part of the annual Buddhist religious celebrations. The *Esala* festival is celebrated at various shrines, but the *Esala Perahera* at Kandy is the largest and most spectacular in Ceylon; it is said to have taken place almost every year for more than 2000 years. The Kings of Kandy have walked in Kandy *Peraheras*; Temple officials and Kandy chieftains, in the colorful traditional costumes, walk in it today (or ride elephants), as a part of the traditional ritual and spectacle. The festival lasts for about two weeks; its religious ceremonies, every

evening, are followed by a perahera, gradually increasing in size and grandeur, and building up to the climax of the last night, when hundreds of Kandyan dancers, drummers, and almost a hundred elephants parade the town in a glittering pageant. The origin of the Kandy Perahera is not known; it seems, from the records, to have been in honor of the four Hindu deities whose dewales and priests, in Kandy, still take part in the Esala festival and the Perahera. Although Ceylon today is said to be the world center of Buddhism, Buddhism did not come to Ceylon until the third century B.C. A tooth of the Lord Buddha is said to have been brought into Ceylon by an Indian princess, concealed in the coils of her hair. The Dalada Maligawa, the Temple of the Tooth, was built in Kandy in 1700 A.D., and the Tooth Relic was first carried in a perahera in a golden casket on the back of a tusked elephant, in 1775. Although today the Sacred Relic no longer leaves the temple, its casket and other symbols are still carried by the Temple tusker. The bodies, heads and trunks of all the elephants are covered with colored cloth, decorated with gold and silver. (In 1953, the howdahs had electric lighting.) The Temple tusker, a very large elephant, is especially gorgeous, with pearl necklaces and flowers hanging from his long curving tusks, and with a white cloth continually unrolled and placed for him to walk on. During a Perahera evening, Mrs. Simon's favorite place is just across from the main entrance of the Temple, sometimes on the great stone fence. All the members of the Perahera assemble in the Square, the dancers' anklets clinking, drummers adjusting each other's headgear; elephants, their mahouts on their backs, stand crunching the last bit of their suppers, (banana tree or a tender part of a palm tree). One can watch the Temple tusker, as he is slowly attired in his evening's habiliments in the Temple entrance, can see the casket lifted to the howdah and fastened in place. And then this, the largest of all the elephants, self consciously and deliberately descends the Temple steps.

FOLK FESTIVALS IN INDIA*

By SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

The Vedanta Society

St. Louis, Missouri

The Hindu socio-religious life is very rich in festivals. "Thirteen festivals in twelve months" is a common saying in India. Most of these festivals are observed by all Hindu sects in all parts of India in some way or other. Each festival has, however, acquired some local color and form. There are also local festivals prevalent in different provinces and among different communities. There is no fundamental difference between the folk festivals and the festivals of the cultured except the difference of forms and features. The same festivals are observed by the cultured and the uncultured as well, but not in the same way. Those festivities in which the common folk take the initiative and give expression to their natural tendencies and capacities, their ideas and sentiments, can be counted as folk festivals. These festivals did not, perhaps, originate with the common people. Some are mentioned in the classical literature of the Hindus and the Buddhists. It is a general tendency of the human spirit to seek relaxation and self-expression without restraint. According to one of the Puranas, Rama, the Prince of Ajodhya, while living in exile in the woods of Chitrakuta with his wife Sita and brother Lakshmana, celebrated the spring festival, which is the principal folk festival in the present-day India. Later on, the spring festival became associated with the early life of Sri Krishna in Brindavan. In Bengal it has acquired additional religious significance being the birth anniversary of Sri Chaitanya, who lived from 1485 to 1533 A.D., and is worshipped by many as an Incarnation of Divine Love.

All Hindu festivals have some religious background. But secular elements are also noticeable in them. The people try to amuse themselves in various ways and give expression to their love of freedom, beauty, and joy. Sometimes they seem to forget the religious significance of the occasion and indulge in rude songs and behavior.

Each festival is held on a certain day of the lunar fortnight. So the day of its observance does not fall on the same calendar date every year, but varies from the solar day as does the Christian festival of Easter.

*An address given by Swami Satprakashananda at the Folklore Conference of the National Folk Festival Association held under the auspices of the University College, Washington University, Saint Louis, on Wednesday, May 27, 1955.

The festivals are observed in homes, in temples, and in public places, in various ways. An invariable element of the celebration is the worship of God in one or another aspect. On certain occasions clay images of the Deity, sometimes larger than life-size, are made by professional artists. They are ceremonially installed by the priests and elaborate worship is performed with the offering of flowers, fruits, incense, lights, sandal paste, and cooked food. Fasting and feasting also form a part of the celebration. Of course, it is the devout who usually observe the fast, the rest enjoy the feast. Devotional songs sung in chorus to the accompaniment of instrumental music form an important part of the celebration. Drums and cymbals are the two very popular musical instruments of India. There are drums of many different sizes and shapes. Cymbals, too, vary in shape and size. Dance follows the songs in some cases. The Sanskrit word "sangit," which is usually translated as *music*, includes vocal music, instrumental music, and dance. Two weeks ago I had the pleasure of attending the National Folk Festival at Kiel Auditorium. There I noticed a predominance of dancing; in Hindu festivals there is a predominance of song and instrumental music over dancing.

A prominent feature of certain festivals is the street procession, which is attended by all classes of people. It is a long pageantry of persons carrying flags, buntings, gorgeous umbrellas, of caparisoned horses and elephants, of bedecked chariots and thrones, of groups of singers and players enacting religious scenes, and so forth. It is mentioned in the Bhagavatam that there were festivities at the nativity of Sri Krishna. The streets and archways of Vraja (Brindavan) were decorated with flags and festoons. The houses were beautified. The bards sang, the Brahmins chanted the Vedic hymns, the musicians played, the dancers danced. Even the cattle were washed and adorned. The cowherds of Vraja came in a procession gayly dressed carrying presents in their hands. Even in these days a procession is held in some places to commemorate the occasion. This traditional way of jubilation and ostentation is perhaps common to all humanity. Street processions are still prevalent in India on festive occasions, including marriages and triumphs.

Bonfires, firecrackers, and illumination also go with some celebrations. On a new moon night in late autumn every house is illuminated with garlands of lights, so to say. It is called dewali (from Sanskrit "deepāvali"), the festival of lights.

Colorful fairs are held on some occasions. Many popular handicrafts and art productions are exhibited, or presented there for sale.

Women attend public celebrations, but do not take part in them. They usually busy themselves with decorating the homes, and arranging for the feast and the worship of the Deity. Sometimes they join with their relatives and neighbors, sing songs, and make fun. Grandmothers often tell stories to the children relative to the occasion.

The festivals have various sources. Some are connected with the worship of the Deity, in the form of Shiva, who represents the static aspect of the Supreme Being, or Durga, the Divine Mother, representing the dynamic aspect of the Divinity, or Vishnu, the all-gracious Preserver of the Universe. The festival of Shiva is observed on the fourteenth day of the dark fortnight in early spring with complete fast and night-long vigil and worship. It is near the vernal equinox. The festival of the Divine Mother, Durga, is observed close to the autumnal equinox at the harvest home. The car festival of Vishnu is held around the summer solstice when the southward journey of the sun begins.

One festival is particularly connected with the movement of the sun. It is held at the time of the winter solstice, when the passage of the sun into the sign of Capricornus in the zodiac begins. Its name "makara samkrānti" signifies the event. It is also called "uttarāyana samkrānti," which means the beginning of the northward journey of the sun. The people, however, observe the festival with deep religious feeling. They immerse themselves in the Ganges at dawn and give alms.

There are festivals commemorative of the birthdays of Rama, Krishna, and other God-men. The birth anniversary of Rama is held on the ninth day of the bright fortnight in late spring and that of Krishna on the eighth day of the dark fortnight in early autumn. Some are occasioned by certain events in the life of Krishna or Rama. According to some, the Holi festival in spring is connected with the killing of a demon by Sri Krishna. It is also called Dōl, the swing festival, which represents one of His pastimes in Brindavan in full moon light. Another swing festival is held in the bright fortnight at the end of the rainy season. It is said that the worship of the Divine Mother, Durga (the destroyer of distress), was initiated by Rama during his exile. He worshipped the ten-handed Goddess, invoking Her blessings for the success of his campaign against the ten-headed demon, Ravana, the King of Ceylon, who had stolen his wife.

Among the folk festivals in India two are prominent. One is the spring festival called Hōli or Dōl, the other is Rama-lila. On the

former occasion, every laborer, farmer, and servant leave work for two days and feel free from the shackles of life. They form large parties and go from place to place playing drums, singing songs, and occasionally dancing. Some even drink and use rude language, of course, among themselves. One common practice of this celebration is to throw red or pink powder at one another. The heads and faces of the participants become so besmeared with powder that one cannot recognize even his own houseboy, unless one is clever enough to look closely into his eyes. On the following day they squirt colored water with syringes. In some places two parties of singers stand facing each other on platforms raised for the purpose and sing aloud responsive choruses. Each party includes as many as a hundred singers.

Rama-lila is a kind of primitive performance dramatizing the scenes from the life of Rama. This is held usually on the occasion of Dasharā, which is the truly national festival of the Hindus. It is the tenth day of the worship of the Divine Mother, Durga, in autumn. In some places, Durga is worshipped in the image on the seventh, the eighth, and the ninth day of the bright fortnight. Then, on the tenth day, the day of Dasharā, the image is carried by men in a gala procession in the evening and immersed in some lake, or river, or in the sea, as the case may be. On this occasion every junior pays his respects to his elders. Every visitor at home or in the business place is entertained with sweetmeats. Presents are given to friends and relatives. The employers feed the employees and make gifts to them. Everywhere there is an exchange of greetings. Even the poorest man puts on new clothes for the occasion. Joyousness and cordiality fill the atmosphere.

Rama-lila is usually held in the evening in the open air in a public place. Sometimes it continues ten or twelve days. Men, women, and children attend the play with great joy and devotion. The characters of the Ramayana, in which the life of Rama is depicted, have furnished the Hindus with ethical ideals in all spheres of life. There is hardly any Hindu man or woman, who has not received moral or religious inspiration from this great Sanskrit epic. There are several popular versions of the book in vernaculars, which the common people read or listen to.

Rama was the eldest son of the King Dasharatha of Ajodhya (modern Oudh). He was the heir-apparent to the throne but was sent into exile for fourteen years through the machinations of his stepmother, who wanted to secure the kingdom for her son, Bharata. The old king died out of grief for Rama. Bharata did not sit on

the throne, but placed Rama's wooden sandals there and ruled the kingdom on his behalf. Rama's devoted wife, Sita, and his faithful stepbrother, Lakshmana, followed him into the forest. They moved southward and lived happily among natural surroundings. One day, in the absence of Rama and Lakshmana, Sita was stolen and carried away by the demon king, Ravana, to his golden kingdom in Ceylon. The mighty Ravana tried in all possible ways to win the hand of Sita, but she was unflinching in her devotion to her husband. Rama rallied a large army of monkeys (probably the aborigines of India), of whom Hanuman was the chief. With their help he finally defeated Ravana, rescued Sita, and returned to Ajodhya on the expiry of the term of exile. He gave the kingdom of Ceylon to Ravana's brother, Bibhishana.

The person who plays the part of Rama's ally and devotee, Hanuman, appears wearing a monkey mask and a long curly tail. Occasionally he climbs trees and jumps from branch to branch. He also carries on his head paper-made mountains, which represent the heaps of rocks that were used in building the bridge between India and Ceylon over which Rama marched with his monkey troops. Women's parts are played by boys who have girlish features and who wear female dress. Towards the end of the festival, a huge effigy of the ten-headed demon King, Ravana, the vanquished foe of Rama, which is made of paper and bamboos, is burnt with shouts of rejoicing.

In Bengal there is a folk festival associated with the worship of Shiva. It is held in early summer and called Gājan. In almost every neighborhood in some cities, a small building is reserved for the purpose. It also serves as a meeting place for amusement. At the time of the festival, Shiva is worshipped there in the image. Every household sends its offering of flowers, fruits, and sweets. After the performance of the worship, one of the devotees appears in the guise of Shiva and another (usually a boy) in the guise of his consort, Gauri. They move from house to house and dance. In the evening, someone puts on the guise of Kali and dances with swords in hands. Several such parties come out on the occasion. Besides these, people organize groups of singers, who dramatize religious scenes and visit different places. The songs are composed by their leaders.

Apart from being a source of amusement, the folk festivals have proved to be a great educational force for the masses. By providing them opportunities to work together for a common cause, the festivals make them public-spirited, and strengthen the bond of union among them. The various functions call forth their artistic talents, literary

abilities, poetic powers, and capacities for organized work. Their songs and literary compositions have a natural flavor, free from artificiality, full of grace, spontaneity, and beauty. Many folk poems, songs, and sayings have acquired literary status and become the common property of the nation. In some places, poetasters organize parties of singers. A popular pastime is to watch two opponent poetasters carry on debate in extempore verses for hours. The followers of each sing a refrain from time to time.

The fairs held at the festivals give the people an occasion to develop their skill in making toys and other handicrafts. Their aesthetic sense is also cultivated through the decorations that form an invariable part of the celebrations. Women have developed a special art of painting, which is called "alpina." Their paint is rice powder mixed with water and their brush is a little piece of rag held by the fingers. With this simple equipment they make exquisite diagrams, draw lotuses and other figures, and decorate the floors and walls, the porches and door sills, and even the courtyard for the occasion.

So far I have dealt with the festivals of the Hindus, who form the bulk of Indian population. But no account of the folk festivals of India can be complete without mentioning the Muslim festivals. The most notable of the folk festivals of the Mohammedans is Moharrum, which is also the name of the first lunar month of the Muslim year, in which it is celebrated. It is held in commemoration of the martyrdom of Hassan and Hussein, the two grandsons of the Prophet Mohammad. Both of them suffered tragic deaths at the hands of their rival claimants to the Caliphate, the supreme leadership of the Muslim world. Mohammad did not have a son. His daughter, Fatima, married his cousin, Ali, who succeeded in being the Caliph, but was assassinated by an opponent. After Ali's death, his eldest son, Hassan, declared himself as the Caliph, but was killed by his father's rival. Then came the turn of his younger brother, Hussein. On the plain of Karbela in Iraq, he was entrapped, along with his young son and followers, by a vast army of his enemy, Yezid. There first his son and then he died tragic deaths.

The Shias and the Sunnis form the two primary divisions of the Mohammedans. It is mainly the Sunnis who observe a period of mourning during the first ten days of the month of Moharrum. On the tenth day a procession is held. A large paper-made mausoleum of Hassan and Hussein, called *Tāzia*, is carried along the streets with wailing and the beating of breasts by hundreds of Moham-

medans, to a place called Karbela. Many Hindus attend this festival. Many Mohammedans also attend Hindu festivals.

There is an interconnection of folk lore and culture lore. They penetrate each other. It may sound strange to many, if I say, that the caste system has not culturally segregated the lower classes among the Hindus. Originally, it was based on the principle of the division of labor according to inborn tendencies and acquired capacities. The purpose was not to keep down the lower classes but to let each rise to a higher level, through the performance of duties on hand. The Brahmin was the ideal of the society; the Shudra was expected to rise by gradual stages to Brahminhood. Various ethnic groups and cultural units were incorporated into Hindu society on the same principle. The present caste division determined by parentage is a deviation from the original pattern. Religious and social reformers from Buddha down to Mahatma Gandhi have rebelled against it. It has been the constant endeavor of the great leaders to reach the individuals at their own level. With this end in view they have devised various methods to accommodate the high metaphysical truths and life-attitudes to the psychophysical status of the common folk. Mythology and rituals have developed mainly from these efforts. Itinerant monks have also carried religious teachings and ideals to the doors of all. As a result, saints, seers, and poets have arisen from the lowest ranks. They are adored by Brahmins as well as by Pariahs. Some of the Vedic seers such as Kavasa, Mahidas, were Shudras by birth. The *Mahabharata* (the other Sanskrit epic) records the words of wisdom of a hunter-sage (dharma-vyadha). In the *Ramayana* there is the story of the scavenger-prince, Guhaka, who was a dear friend and devotee of Rama, an Incarnation of God. The saint Kavir was a weaver, Ravidasa a cobbler, Sena a barber, Nama-deva of Marwar a carder of cotton, Tukarama of Maharashtra a farmer, to mention just a few out of numerous instances. Among women also there have been numberless seers and sages from the Vedic time up to the present age.

The common folk usually receive metaphysical truths and even historical events through their imagination and feelings. They have a tendency to interpret all these in figurative languages. As a result, legends weave around spiritual and historical truths. The fables that have clustered on the personalities and the teachings of Krishna, Buddha, Shankara, and other religious leaders and have found admittance into standard literature are mainly the contributions of the mass mind. Though not historically true, they illustrate moral and spiritual principles.

NEW JOURNALS

FABULA. It is remarkable that despite the great number of journals devoted to the subject of folklore in general and despite the fact that the study of folklore received its greatest impetus from the study of the folktale there has heretofore not been published a journal devoted to the folktale. Now, under the editorship of Professor Doctor Kurt Ranke of Kiel, Germany, a new international journal called *Fabula* will be devoted to studies primarily concerned with the folk narrative. According to the preliminary announcement, it is hoped to make *Fabula* something like the intellectual center of international folktale research with the aim of promoting the exchange of ideas as well as the factual knowledge of the tale. Contributions in the nature of articles of a scientific nature, collections of texts, research reports, announcements of works in progress, reviews, etc. are invited. They should be sent to Professor Dr. Kurt Ranke, Kitzberg near Kiel, Germany.

VICTORIAN STUDIES. *Victorian Studies* will be devoted to the examination of English culture during the period extending approximately from 1830 to 1914. Its editors—Dr. Philip Appleman, Dr. William A. Madden, and Mr. Michael Wolff—agree that this period demands a deliberate coordination of the various academic disciplines and they will publish relevant articles in any of the humanities, arts, and sciences. The journal will carry reviews, a notes-and-queries section, bibliographies, and checklists. Contributions are welcome and should conform to the MLA style sheet and be accompanied by return postage. All contributions and communications should be addressed to The Editors, *Victorian Studies*, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

THE CENTENNIAL REVIEW OF ARTS AND SCIENCE. A general quarterly magazine, the first issue of which will be published in the winter of 1957, *The Centennial Review* is intended for readers with a broad interest in the liberal arts. It is designed to present articles in the principal disciplines of the sciences and humanities in such a manner that the achievements and implications of specialized scholarship may be disseminated over a wide range of fields. Manuscripts in all fields are solicited; the norm for length is 5000-6000 words, and all contributions should be sent to the Editor, *The Centennial Review*, 112 Morrill Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.

THEY WALKED BY NIGHT

By E. G. ROGERS

*Tennessee Wesleyan College
Athens, Tennessee*

The seven stories used here were recorded by students from notes and interviews and reported through their classes at Tennessee Wesleyan College over a period of nine years. These story experiences embraced the area of East Tennessee, west North Carolina, and northern Georgia. The stories were written from brief notes taken at the time of the interview or as shortly thereafter as possible. The story incidents were secured from persons who either experienced these things firsthand or who related them as told to them by others.

Except for the first story, "Too Much Campaigning," which was reconstructed from oral accounts reported by students, the others as given here are essentially the same in style and tone as the students reported them. References are also made in context and in footnotes. These are not told merely as ghost stories within the area, but with an air of confident certitude even while a veil of supernatural mysticism hovers about them. Maybe the night in which they walked also was sometimes shrouded in mystery.

TOO MUCH CAMPAIGNING

This story was reported by Emert E. Crowson who says that it is told in his community as a ghost tale.

This incident happened a little more than half a century ago, it is said, near Gatlinburg. The county political elections were getting under way, and the race for sheriff was a "hot" one. There was the usual mud-slinging and digging in from both candidates, while the general public gave but little notice to either, except for the apparent incredulity of both.

Previous to the period of their political campaignings, both candidates for the office had a neighborly (many who knew about it said "unneighborly") falling out about the location of the line of some adjoining property. Nor had these matters been settled when issues of a political nature added a further tenseness to their feelings.

One of our candidates was returning horseback about dusk one evening from a day of hard campaigning when his horse was suddenly stopped by the sight of an object which seemed to appear from among a cluster of honeysuckle vines by the roadside. It appeared to be a large gray coffin covered with roses, which floated

across the road before him without apparent visible support. It as promptly disappeared on the other side of the road.

Naturally our candidate was shocked and speechless. Partially recovering from his fright, he spurred his horse toward home where, upon arrival, he hastened into the house even without unsaddling his horse. Saying but little to his wife, he went to his room where he broke out in a cold sweat and found no sleep or rest that night.

The next night he was returning by that same road when the coffin reappeared. But instead of crossing the road this time, it stopped directly in front of him, whereupon the lid opened slowly and the figure of a man began to arise from the coffin. The man in the coffin appeared to be his political opponent.

Shaken with fright and terror, our candidate went for his Colt's revolver firing six times into the coffin, after which he rushed to the house as quickly as possible. That night he didn't sleep at all.

The next morning he started to a nearby store. As he turned up the same road flanked by honeysuckle vines, he saw his political opponent lying in the road before him, dead, with six bullet holes in his head. He was convicted of murder in the courts and hanged in January of the following year.

IMPLORES SPIRITUAL AID

Related by William J. Elzey, Jr., a student then of Etowah, whose father was pastor of an Etowah church.

I have heard my father use this illustration in the pulpit. There is no ordinary explanation. A minister was awakened one night by a frantic knock on the door. Going to the door, he met a young woman who breathlessly explained the reason for her late call. She said that her father was sick and not expected to live, and that the family would like to have a minister's consolation. The girl had come to him, she said, because there was no telephone near her home.

The minister prepared to accompany the girl to her home. When they arrived there, she told him to go inside. She remained without. The wife of the dying man met the minister at the door.

As the minister later was leaving, the wife asked him how he had known of her husband's illness. The minister explained how he had been summoned by her daughter. The astounded woman replied that her daughter had been dead for two years.

A SPECTRAL VISITOR

Related by William J. Elzey, Jr.

During my father's pastorate at Copper Hill, Tennessee, one of our members experienced a visit from a departed spirit. Mr. X had died leaving a widow and several children, all of legal age.

Several months after his death, a woman of our church was visited by Mr. X. She had gone to bed and lay dozing when a figure in the chair beside her bed attracted her attention. She immediately recognized this figure as Mr. X, her former neighbor and acquaintance. He spoke to her saying that he had come to ask a favor. He did not think that his wife and children had been living right in the sight of God, and he wanted her to ask them to live better. After stating this request, the spectral visitor vanished.

MAN MURDERS GHOST

This account was given by Paul Kelley, native of Englewood and currently a teacher in the Knoxville Public Schools. McCaslin gave this story to the father of Paul Kelley in 1949. The incident occurred twenty-five years prior to this date.

Arlie McCaslin was driving home early one night after bringing a load of acid wood to Englewood in McMinn County. He was driving along the road which lies between Englewood and Athens. The moon was shining brightly so that any objects along the road could be easily seen. The road lay between two ridges, and the part which was the scene of our story is called Brock Hollow.

Mr. McCaslin saw at some distance in front of him what appeared to be the figure of a man. As he came up with him, he greeted him cordially. The apparition, if we may call it that, said nothing. But as the rear end of the long cedar wagon-frame passed him, the object began climbing into the rear end of the bed.

When it had advanced half way the length of the frame, McCaslin told it to stop. When it disregarded his order, he grabbed a loose standard and swung as hard as he could, striking the figure on what appeared to be its head. Being a very large man, McCaslin was convinced that he had killed a man, for the object dropped from the wagon into the roadway with a thud.

Racing his horses to the home of Joe Harris, the nearest officer, he asked Harris to go back with him to see who the person was. In a very short time they returned to the spot to find no evidence of the body or of foul play. No report of missing persons was ever announced, and the whole matter remains a mystery to this day.

JEALOUS GHOST

Related by William J. Elzey, Jr.

Mrs. Rogers, an intimate friend of our family, told me this story. She was left a widow with several children by her first husband. Mr. Rogers, a widower, began calling on her. One night as they were riding in a buggy along a road near Chattanooga, Mrs. Rogers saw a woman and a dog coming down the road. As the walking figure drew nearer, Mrs. Rogers recognized it as the former wife of Mr. Rogers.

Then Mrs. Rogers let out a shrill scream, for it seemed that the buggy had passed directly over the body of the former Mrs. Rogers. Mr. Rogers stopped the horse as quickly as he could inquiring at the same time the reason for her alarm. When she told him what she had seen, he said that he too had seen the dog leap the fence to the side at their approach, but that he had observed nothing more. An immediate search of the nearby terrain revealed no trace of the suspected presence of the former Mrs. Rogers.

HITCH-HIKING GHOST

I was working at Ocoee Dam No. 3 back in 1941, as commissary clerk when I overheard a couple of guys discussing this experience which they had had the night before. They were driving home after getting off from the eleven o'clock shift and were passing a place known as Greasy Creek when they came upon a woman who appeared to be between thirty-five and forty years of age. She was a little shabbily dressed, and seemed to be awaiting a ride. They stopped for her to get up between them on the front seat.

She told them that she was going to Parksville to visit her sister, and gave her sister's address and house number. Nothing was said on the way down; and as they drove up to let her out, she suddenly vanished from their presence. Being very puzzled, they went on to the sister's house and told her the story. She did not look surprised. She said that this had happened several times before, and that her sister had been dead for about ten years.

DANCING GHOST

This story was told by Ed McQueen of Ducktown in 1951. Similar versions of it were given by Mary Ardary of Copper Hill and Louise Biggs of Benton.

It was about the year 1930 that two young fellows who lived between Ocoee, Tennessee, and Robinsville, North Carolina, decided

to attend a dance somewhere in the direction of Robinsville. They were going together in a car owned by one of them and were travelling over the mountain roads in the direction of the place where the party was being held.

Having gone some distance upon their way, their headlights caught the image of a girl standing by the roadside apparently awaiting their approach. As she too seemed to be dressed for the party, they invited her to join them for the remaining distance. She entered the car and conversed with them in a natural but casual manner.

Upon reaching the place, each of the boys asked the girl for a dance, and danced with her more than once before the party broke up. After the party they returned her to her home which was along the route they had come.

One of the boys went with her from the car to the house where she said her parents were living. They entered the front part of the house where he left the girl without having seen any member of her family. He rejoined his companion at the car and drove a short distance when he discovered that he had left his hat where he departed from the girl.

Deciding to return for the hat, his knock upon the door was answered by the girl's mother. When he explained what had happened and the object of his return, he was informed that they had no living daughter since this same girl whom he had unmistakably described had been dead for a number of years.

OHIO VALLEY BALLADS

Despite the plethora of folkmusic records which threaten to inundate us today, and despite the fact that some of the best printed collections of folksongs have come from the Middle West, until recently there have been no recordings issued of folksongs from this area. In late 1955, however, this omission was rectified when Folkways Records published *Ohio Valley Ballads* (Album No. 23/2) sung by Bruce Buckley, a graduate student of folklore at Indiana University. The album of eight songs is accompanied by a booklet containing the texts of the songs and notes by Charles Edward Smith.

Mr. Buckley, who accompanies himself on the guitar, is certainly one of the most pleasant singers to be heard on folksong records today. An accomplished guitarist who does more than merely strum

chords, he presents his songs in a delightful manner without in any way destroying their effect as folksongs. Moreover, the chameleonlike nature of his voice allows him to reflect the voices of the informants from whom he collected the songs without at the same time reflecting their unmusical qualities. Thus the record makes for pleasant listening indeed.

One must be a little less enthusiastic about the choice of songs. On side one are found "Rowan County Crew," "Pearl Bryan," "Sidney Allen," and "Sam Bass"; on side two are found "Lulu Viers," "Rarden Wreck," "John Henry," and "Molly Bonder." To call "Rowan County Crew," "Sidney Allen" (though its tune and especially its rhythm are certainly folkloristic) and "Rarden Wreck" folksongs is to stretch the definition considerably. The monotonous similarity of "Pearl Bryan," "Lulu Viers," and "Molly Bonder" is annoying, but the popularity of murdered girl ballads in America, especially in the Middle West, may justify the inclusion of all three.

The most interesting song on the record both from a textual and from a musical point of view is "John Henry." Collected by Mr. Buckley from "Uncle" Ira Cephus, a negro resident of Portsmouth, Ohio, the text and tune combine in an unassuming manner to reflect the enthusiasm in which American folk tradition has long held the song. A full description of this version may be found in *Midwest Folklore*, vol. III: 1 (Spring, 1953) on pages 9-10. To hear this version of "John Henry" is to understand the way in which an individual may contribute to the development and re-creation of a song and still remain within tradition.

One can hope that Folkways will employ Mr. Buckley for further records. Moreover, one could suggest that Mr. Buckley record some of the British ballads he collected in the Middle West, or, for that matter, that he be allowed to select a dozen songs from his pleasant and extensive repertoire.

W.E.R.

"A VERY CURIOUS AND PAINSTAKING PERSON" ROBERT GRAVES AS MYTHOGRAPHER

BY HERBERT WEISINGER
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan

The Greek Myths. Robert Graves. (Penguin Books, Baltimore, Maryland.) Volume 1, 370 pages; Volume 2, 412 pages. 95 cents per volume.

The reviewer who undertakes to deal with Robert Graves' *The Greek Myths* must, from the very beginning, decide which of two widely divergent approaches to it he will take, for it will not be by the simple arithmetic of adding up the errors he finds but by his commitment to his choice that he will shape his judgment of the work. Unfortunately, his option is made doubly difficult for him, first, by the ambiguous nature of the book itself, which, ostensibly a companion to the Penguin Classics in the form of a dictionary of classical mythology, is in fact a bold recasting of the corpus of Greek myth into a new and exciting but questionable mold, and then by Graves' own methodological ambivalence as manifested in his treatment of his materials; for while superficially he appears to follow the practices of conventional classical scholarship on myth, his real concern is with fitting his subject within a theoretical framework decidedly at variance with the present position of that scholarship. Yet, unless there is at the outset a sympathetic understanding between the author's ultimate intention and the reader, unless the book is being read for what it is, and not for what it is not, *The Greek Myths* stands in danger of being misunderstood and therefore condemned. But, overshadowing even these considerations, is this question: if *The Greek Myths* is intended for readers who are interested in myth but who are not conversant with the many and vexing problems of origin, authenticity, and interpretation with which the study of myth is now embroiled, should so individual and unconventional a book be given the wide and untechnical acceptance which publication by Penguin Books makes virtually certain?

Both Graves and his publisher make the somewhat exaggerated claim that "... not for over a century, since Smith's *Dictionary of Classical Mythology* first appeared, has the attempt been made to provide for the English reader a complete 'mythology'," the implication being that *The Greek Myths* is to be regarded primarily as "... a mythological dictionary on modern lines large enough in its

scope for all normal requirements of the student and general reader." The two volumes, numbering nearly eight hundred pages in the Penguin format, cover in systematic fashion the myths of the Greek gods and heroes, starting with the several variants of the Greek creation myths and ending with the deeds of Odysseus. As Graves tells us, his method has been ". . . to assemble in harmonious narrative all the scattered elements of each myth, supported by little-known variants which may help determine the meaning, and to answer all the questions that arise, as best I can, in anthropological or historical terms." Structurally, there are three parts to the book so arranged that each of the 171 sections consists, first, of Graves' own retelling of the myth in all its details; second, a list of the sources, mainly classical and patristic, of his reconstructed narratives; and finally, an examination and explanation of the myth, utilizing parallels drawn from the myths of other peoples; historical, archaeological, and anthropological data; iconography; and, above all, the application of Graves' own method of myth interpretation. Graves' industry is never in doubt; he has painstakingly unravelled the jumbled coil of sources from which the myths must be disentangled and has collated them into smooth and integrated narratives; his learning is formidable and gracefully carried; and indeed the book as a whole is an astonishing achievement for one man alone to have accomplished. Surely one of the masters of contemporary English prose, Graves has retold the myths in a crisp and laconic style which brings out their flavor; his language has the supple strength of the Greek.

Taken at its face value, then, *The Greek Myths* appears as a work of conventional scholarship, to be examined on the basis of the accuracy and completeness of its scholarship, as one would examine, say, H. J. Rose's *Handbook of Greek Mythology*. Graves himself would seem to second this procedure: "Not for the first time," he writes, echoing a complaint previously made in *The White Goddess* and *The Nazarene Gospel Restored*, "I will find the scholarly specialists combining to criticize me on parts of details which they have made their own, though not combining to suggest an alternative general hypothesis." Though the book has not, at this writing, been extensively reviewed in the classical journals, one can anticipate the criticisms which the scholarly specialists, as though in response to Graves' challenge, will make of it.¹ In the first place, they will question his narrative syntheses; they will ask whether he is right in giving equal weight of authority to his varied and unequal sources in order to attain his goal of a harmonious and full retelling of the myths. They will wonder if the aesthetic necessities of narrative form have not in

effect over-ridden the bounds of scholarly discrimination between sources. It is instructive, for example, to compare Graves' version of the Hyacinthus myth (I, pp. 78-79) with Guthrie's analysis of it in his *The Greeks and Their Gods* (Boston, 1955, pp. 86-87); Graves has brought together perhaps a little too forcefully the contradictory motifs of which the myth is built up for the sake of rounding off the tale, and Miss Mellink's study, *Hyakinthos*, gives a clearer view of the myth as seen in the light of its historical unfolding. I should say, in partial defense of Graves, that the problem of determining the degrees of authority of the sources of myth is still unsettled; even Rose falls into the error of multiple quotation from a variety of unequal sources to fill out the narrative of a myth. Again, and this is somewhat unexpected, the very complexity of the layers of origin and meaning embedded in the Dionysus myth, which in part accounts for its fascination, is perforce smoothed over in Graves' rendering which has something of the tepid taste of a mythological representation by Angelica Kauffman. Next, since Graves is in the habit of making historical and anthropological assertions without documenting them, his critics will naturally ask for the evidence on which he bases his statements, particularly where his bland assurance glosses over scholarly disagreement and uncertainty; we can expect another exchange of letters between frustrated reviewer and exasperated author of the kind which followed *The New Statesman and Nation* review of *The Nazarene Gospel Restored*. I cite two examples chosen at random: "A question remains: was the double-S really the monogram of Sisyphus. The icon illustrating the myth probably showed him examining the tracks of the stolen sheep and cattle . . ." (I, p. 220) and "The myth of Enalus and Phieis is probably deduced from an icon which showed Amphitrite and Triton riding on dolphins" (I, 291). One is almost persuaded of the actual existence of the first icon and of the effect of the other until one is arrested by the "probably." If the first icon exists, what is it and where is it reproduced? This is not a petty question since Graves is fond of referring to iconographic representations of myths but hardly ever with the necessary identification, and while in a book of this sort, the meticulous documentation which characterizes, for example, Nilsson's use of iconographic evidence is not to be expected, it is not churlish to ask for the pertinent bibliographical information, particularly since the terrain here is far from being mapped. And does the icon precede the myth; does, in practice, a myth derive from its depiction, or are not icons of myths rather representations of ritual actions already performed? But Graves has himself exposed this mythogenetic sleight

of hand in the introduction where he has previously defined true myth "... as the reduction to narrative shorthand of ritual mime performed on public festivals, and in many cases recorded pictorially on temple walls, vases, seals, bowls, mirrors, chests, shields, tapestries, and the like."

The claim that the conclusions of modern anthropology and archaeology are embodied in *The Greek Myths* is substantiated by the text so far as archaeology is concerned but is less warranted with regard to anthropology. Graves' espousal of the matriarchal origin of society is surely out of line with the findings of contemporary anthropology, and, outside of an occasional reference to African or Australian tribal practices, the evidence from anthropology is not systematically employed. I am myself uncertain as to how the evidence from anthropology can be properly used to elucidate early myth, and Graves would appear to share this uncertainty, for while he professes to answer questions about myth in anthropological terms, he declares earlier that: "A true science of myth should begin with a study of archaeology, history, and comparative religion . . ."; intentionally or not, he has here omitted reference to anthropology. On the other hand, he handles the archaeology of Greece with skill and authority and has related the Minoan-Mycenaean monuments to Greek myth with care and in illuminating detail. But while he shows that he is alert to the value of the parallels which can be drawn between Greek myths and those of the ancient Near East, he does not, disappointingly, exploit them to the fullest advantage. Perhaps it is because of the placing of the notes directly after each myth, but the progressive movement westward of the myth patterns from the fertile crescent to the eastern and southern shores of the Mediterranean and thence across the islands in the Aegean Sea and the Sea of Crete to the Greek mainland is not shown in action and is thereby robbed of its relevance to Greek myth. Instead, Graves is much more excited by the parallels which can be made with post-Hellenic, non-Latin European myths, and especially with Celtic myths, which, since he regards them as indigenous in origin, he employs to clarify obscurities in the corresponding Greek myths. This procedure is in accord with his belief that "... despite differences of race and climate, the religious system of the neolithic and Bronze Ages in Europe seems to have been remarkably homogeneous." But again, scholarly opinion on this point is much more divided than Graves' easy statement would suggest, and it was precisely because he thought that Frazer had failed to discriminate sharply between the myths and ritual practices of the peoples of the ancient Near East that Frankfort attacked the methodology of *The Golden Bough* in *Kingship and the Gods*.

While errors in detail might be picked out in *The Greek Myths*, no particular purpose would be served to list them here; such errors are unavoidable in a work of this scope; and I am sure that they will not impugn Graves' attainments as a classicist. Rather, since the full weight of scholarly disapproval will fall on Graves' general hypothesis within which he has placed his version of the Greek myths, his point of view needs to be objectively summarized. Graves has himself succinctly defined his thesis in the foreword to *The White Goddess*: "My thesis," he writes, "is that the language of poetic myth anciently current in the Mediterranean and Northern Europe was a magical language bound up with popular religious ceremonies in honour of the Moon-Goddess, or Muse, some of them dating from the Old Stone Age, and that this remains the language of true poetry—'true' in the nostalgic modern sense of 'the unimprovable original, not a synthetic substitute.' The language was tampered with in late Minoan times when invaders from Central Asia began to substitute patrilinear for matrilinear institutions and remodel or falsify the myths to justify social changes. Then came the early Greek philosophers who were strongly opposed to magical poetry as threatening their new religion of logic, and under their influence a rational poetic language (now called the Classical) was elaborated in honour of their patron Apollo and imposed on the world as the last word in spiritual illumination: a view that has prevailed practically ever since in European schools and universities, where myths are now studied only as quaint relics of the nursery age of mankind." This thesis is in turn the base on which *The Greek Myths* is founded.

The study of Greek mythology, Graves insists, "... should begin with an understanding of the matriarchal and totemistic system which obtained in Europe before the arrival of patriarchal invaders from the east and north. One can then follow its gradual supersession first by a matrilinear and then by a patrilinear sacred monarchy, at last by a fully patriarchal system—as the migrant tribe with its phratries and clans gave place to the regional state with its towns and villages." These social changes are reflected in the changes of content and meaning of the myths themselves, a development which begins with the worship of the Great Goddess and ends with *The Iliad*. "Early Greek mythology is concerned," Graves states, "with the changing relations between the queen and her lovers, which begin with their yearly, or twice-yearly, sacrifices; and end, at the time when the *Iliad* was composed and kings boasted: 'We are far better than our fathers!', with her eclipse by an unlimited male monarchy." Thus Graves has irrevocably committed himself to the matriarchal

theory of social and myth origins; the influence of Bachofen and Briffault is unmistakable and is acknowledged by Graves. At the same time, his definition of true myth, already quoted, derives from the theory of the ritual origin of myth which, as Hyman has shown by an analysis of Harrison's *Themis*, consists of three postulates: first, that myth arises out of rite, and not the reverse; second, that it is "... spoken correlative of the acted rite"; and third, that it is *sui generis*. By proposing that mythological research should follow the lines suggested "... by such indefatigable and humane scholars as Sir James Frazer, A. B. Cook, F. M. Cornford, Jane Harrison, E. R. Dodds," Graves acknowledges his debt to the ritual school as well. Finally, by his insistence that all myths are derived from and are variants of the single poetic theme, "... the antique story," as Graves calls it in *The White Goddess*, "which falls into thirteen chapters and an epilogue, of the birth, life, death and resurrection of the God of the Waxing Year; the central chapters concern the God's losing battle with the God of the Waning Year for love of the capricious and all-powerful Threefold Goddess, their mother, bride, and layer-out," he may be said to belong as well to the school which believes in the monomyth, the single pattern of death and rebirth within which all myths are embraced and of which they are but variants.

Now, it is possible for these three views to coexist, if not quite at peace with each other, then at least in a state of suspicious neutrality. But Graves is not content with working with them alone; he has added yet another approach and this one is altogether incompatible with the others, and especially with the ritual school. For when he roundly declares in *The Greek Myths*: "A large part of Greek myth is politico-religious history," he reveals himself an out-and-out euhemerist, and to make sure that there is no mistaking him on this point, he uncompromisingly rejects the psycho-analytical approach to myth as altogether unfounded in fact, for otherwise the logic of his position *vis a vis* the first three views would have forced him in the end to turn to the psycho-analytic method of mythogony. Once the euhemeristic bias is detected, the notes to *The Greek Myths* can be seen as constituting a single-minded and sustained attempt to relate the motifs which cluster about the myths, and therefore the myths themselves, to real and actual historic events, and it is to this end that the full force of his learning is brought to bear. Here are some typical statements: "Except for the matter of the imprisoned winds, and the family incest on Lipara, the remainder of the myth concerns tribal migrations"; "The myth of Erechtheus and Eumolpus

concerns the subjugation of Eleusis by Athens, and the Thracio-Libyan origin of the Eleusinian Mysteries"; "This myth concerns ecclesiastical politics in Northern Greece, and the Peloponnese: the suppression, in Apollo's name, of a pre-Hellenic medical cult, presided over by Moon-priestesses at the oracular shrines of local heroes reincarnate as serpents, or crows, or ravens"; "This myth records the early arrival in Greece of Helladic colonists from Palestine, by way of Rhodes, and their introduction of agriculture into the Peloponnese"; "The Federalization of Attica"; "The myth of Demeter and Poseidon records a Hellenic invasion of Arcadia."

Yet the proponents of the ritual school have time and again argued that it cannot usefully coexist with the euhemeristic approach; as Hyman has said, "... myths are never the record of historical events or people, but freed from their ritual origins they may attach to historical events or people . . .; they never originate as scientific or aetiological explanations of nature, but freed from their ritual origins may be so used . . ." This crucial distinction Graves signally fails to observe, and over and over again we find in the notes the two points of view placed side by side without any sense of contradiction, as in this explanation of the Daedalus myth: "In one sense the labyrinth from which Daedalus and Icarus escaped was the mosaic floor with the maze pattern, which they had to follow in the ritual partridge dance; but Daedalus' escape to Sicily, Cumæ, and Sardinia refers perhaps to the flight of the native bronze-workers from Crete as the result of successive Hellenic invasions." Greek mythology, Graves assures us is "... no more mysterious in content than are modern election cartoons," and though he scorns Socrates for having, as he says, turned his back on poetic myths, it is by employing Socrates' own method of rational inquiry that Graves, "the very curious and painstaking person," postulated by Socrates as the successful mythographer, has been able to reconcile myth with probability.

How are we to account for Graves' methodological inconsistencies? I am afraid that the contradiction can be explained only by a paradox. Despite his devotion to the classics and to classical themes, Graves' habit of mind is, for all that he disclaims it, essentially romantic. The difference between the classical poet and the true poet, he insists in *The White Goddess*, is a difference in attitude toward the White Goddess; the classical poet asserts himself her master but the true test of a poet's vision is "... the accuracy of his portrayal of the White Goddess and of the island over which she rules." The final chapters of *The White Goddess* are devoted to showing how and

why the worship of the White Goddess was attacked and beaten down in western society; they set forth the evidence in detail which Graves is able to offer only in abrupt and shorthand form in *The Greek Myths*. In essence, Graves argues that once the concept of a patriarchal God and of a theocratic society gained domination over western thought and institutions, the poet lost his sense of the White Goddess; "the ancient, intuitive language of poetry" was neither spoken nor understood; and "... the single grand theme of poetry: the life, death and resurrection of the Spirit of the Year, the Goddess' son and lover" was all but forgotten. Apollo symbolizes for him the triumph of reason, law, science, order, and conformity over the orgiastic freedom of the worship of the White Goddess, for, as he says, "... as soon as Apollo the Organizer, God of Science, usurps the power of his Mother the Goddess of inspired truth, wisdom and poetry, and tries to bind her devotees by laws—inspired magic goes, and what remains is theology, ecclesiastical ritual, and negatively ethical behaviour." The climax of his protest comes in a simple declaration: "This is an Apollonian civilization."

Such, then, is Graves' fundamental point of view, without which understanding and judgment of *The Greek Myths* would be incomplete and unfair. This sketch will, I think, justify to the student of the history of the interpretation of myth my characterization of Graves' attitude toward myth as essentially romantic. The influence of German romantic speculation about myth is unmistakable; one hears in Graves echoes of Nietzsche and behind him of Herder, Heyne, Schelling, F. Schlegel, and Schiller: the opposition between the Dionysian and the Apollonian; the intimate relationship between poetry, myth, and religion; the evocation of the power, depth, and mystery of myth; the warfare between popular paganism and official Christianity; the office of the poet as celebrant of the hidden mysteries; these, combined with Graves' conviction that the worship of the White Goddess, though hounded out of the center of official western thought and practice, survived, concealed and disguised, at its fringes (hence, his absorption with Celtic myth, with riddles and anagrams, with cryptography and etymology, though, surprisingly enough, he makes no use of Murray and Spence), and his passionate, even abandoned devotion to the Fatal Woman, "La belle Dame sans merci" (a reading of his recent lyrics as autobiography would show that Graves is far from indulging in fancy; their reiterated theme is "... a sole woman's fatefulness"), this rich complex of ideas and feeling is, I believe, the source of his attitude toward myth. On its surface, then, *The Greek Myths* presents an appearance of serenity, created by the dis-

cipline of its scholarship, its uncompromising rationalism, its determination to reduce the mysteries of myth to common sense, and its straightforward style; these qualities combine to produce an effect which can only be called, ironically enough, Apollonian. But below the cool and smooth facade seethe Graves' passions, barely held in check, as I fear they were not in *The White Goddess* and *The Nazarene Gospel Restored*, by the structural requirements of the dictionary form. *The Greek Myths* has thus the aesthetic property peculiar to Graves' poetry, that of passion congealed in form, and it is this character which gives it its distinction and quality.

I suppose that I am now expected to render an unfavorable verdict on the book. Recall, however, the question which I raised at the beginning of this review; I asked, whether so individual and unconventional a book should be the means by which a large and unprofessional readership should make its acquaintance with Greek myth. My answer is yes, for when the errors and the bias of the method are subtracted from the work as a whole, what remains far outweighs them. The objections which I have raised are, after all, primarily the concern of specialists, but they do not, and this seems to me the single most determining factor, affect the real value of *The Greek Myths* which, by its enthusiasm for myth, its lucid style, and its unshakable conviction that myth is still alive and still meaningful, cannot fail to reach the reader and capture his interest. In the face of the adverse circumstances of our times, to maintain the tradition of myth is a service in comparison with which other considerations must be secondary.

There is in English literature an old and honorable line of scholar-poets who were able to fuse the discipline of scholarship with the love of literature into a poetic amalgam singularly endowed with strength and grace. The chief of these is Milton whose powerful scholarship, firmly embedded in the fertile mixture of the classical and Christian traditions, was the tap-root which nourished and invigorated both his polemics and his poetry. Hardly the man to accept the lazy verdict of conventional opinion, his independence of mind drove him to reshape and thereby to revitalize the theological and mythological traditions within which he worked; with the sharp edges of his occasional obstinacies now rounded off by the passing of time, the essential Miltonic qualities stand out clearly: the vigor of mind, the freshness and skill in the manipulation of traditional materials, the abiding concern with their significance and application, and, above all, the irradicable certainty that learning and art are not to be hidden away untried but are to be used and tested

in the fire of conflict. I am not suggesting that Graves is another Milton but he has the Miltonic pride—he has rightly described himself as “nobody’s servant”—and he has the Miltonic attitude toward the role of learning and art, with the result that his poetry has, though in much less degree of course, the quintessential Miltonic quality of passion in form. I therefore count ourselves as fortunate that we can see the Greek myths through the eyes of a scholar-poet of his stature. However much we may disagree with his vision, we have been forced to look at the myths once more and we have thereby renewed them and made them live again. It is worth recalling the incredible sources which previous students of myth had to rely on; the romantic poets, for example, had to find the gold of myth in the vast rubble heaped up by such mythographers as Bryant, Davies, Stukeley, and Wilford; and though one may not care for Graves’ methods of work, he has given us freely and abundantly of his labor, and more, he has asked us to share his love.

NOTES

¹ Since writing this review, I have come across two specialist reviews, one by the American classicist, Kevin Herbert, in *The Classical Journal*, LI (1956), pp. 191-92, and the other by the St. Andrews authority, A. J. Rose, in *The Classical Review*, LXIX (1955), pp. 208-09. Graves’ fears concerning the scholarly reception of *The Greek Myths* are amply confirmed; though Herbert does try to see the book in the light of Graves’ hypothesis, he rejects it out of hand; Rose is merely merciless.

BOOK REVIEWS

WESTERN LORE

Texas Folk and Folklore. Edited by Mody C. Boatright, Wilson M. Hudson, Allen Maxwell. (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1954.) 354 pp. \$5.00.

To celebrate twenty-five years of annual publication, the editors of the Texas Folklore Society culled from their previous volumes this anthology of their choicest materials. Selections were naturally governed by the necessity to represent the cultural diversity of Texas traditions, the topical divisions of folklore, and the work of their star contributors. The volume fulfills these objectives. Indian, Mexican, Negro, and Anglo folklore all find a place: the Indians with Kiowa-Apache and Alabama-Coushatta tales, the Negro with jests, spirituals, old-time sayings and a sermon; the Mexican with *cuentos*, *corridos*, *dichos*, ghosts, and marvelous cures; and the Anglo with treasure legends, cowboy songs, a description of a cowboy dance, and oil-field tales and lingo. Materials that transcend the boundaries of Texas but represent the genres of folklore appear in children's stories, games and rhymes, popular superstitions about human behavior and animal and plant life, and proverbial utterances. All the well known names in Texas folklore study make an appearance. The volume is dedicated to J. Frank Dobie, who makes four contributions, including his account of the white steed of the prairies. John Lomax is on hand with his famous recording of Sin Killer Griffith's Calvary sermon, Brewer with his Old Marster tales, Boatright with oil legends. Space is allotted to the useful collections of anecdotes by Eddins, of wildlife myths by Strecker, and of Texas folksongs by Owens.

Surely such a volume reflecting the variety of folklore within the largest state in the Union, gathered over a quarter of a century by enthusiastic collectors, should render a notable contribution to American folklore. Why then does the reader set the book down with so empty a feeling? The answer is easy enough. The collection of Texas folklore is motivated by regional and state pride, rather than by any serious interest in comparative folklore. Texas should have the most, the best, and the tallest folklore of any state. The lore is set down as if it were uniquely Texan, and nothing similar existed anywhere else. No notes, references, bibliography or analysis clutter up this volume (and this is generally true for the series as a whole). In spite of the claim of the title, little appears about the folk. The editors frankly state their aim as entertainment, and unashamedly present texts naked of annotation and lacking such elementary data as names of informants.

The amateur regionalists fail to realize that some attempt at theory or synthesis may prove more attractive than dull lists of superstitions and sayings. Boatright's exploration of three tenacious oil-field legends involves research and speculation, and performs a far more valuable service than the mere setting down of three stories would have rendered.

Mechanically the volume also invites criticism. References are given to the original PTFS volumes from which selections are drawn, without indication that they have been severely reduced. Only a fraction of Payne's extended study of "The Frog's Courting" is reprinted, and but a handful of Strecker's examples of reptile myths—both originally published in volumes now out of print. In my copy the index ends abruptly with "Sam Bass," pages 321 and 322 are missing, and the name of John R. Craddock takes the proper place of John A. Lomax as author on page 175.

The Texas Folklore Society under the stimulus of J. Frank Dobie has made available many materials which folklorists can profitably use. Depending upon amateur contributions to a large extent, its editors perhaps must compromise in their demands for technical knowledge. The fact remains that Dobie has developed a romantic regional cult of folklore in Texas by scorning professional training and competence in folklore studies.

Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan

Richard M. Dorson

The Vigilantes of Montana. Thomas J. Dimsdale with an Introduction by E. DeGolyer. (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953.) 268 pp. \$2.00.

For the first volume in the new series of 'The Western Frontier Library' by the University of Oklahoma Press, *The Vigilantes of Montana* or *Popular Justice in the Rocky Mountains*, is an excellent choice. Here is a unique documentary. Within two years after the organization of the vigilantes and the arrest and summary execution of the notorious road agent and sheriff of Bannack, Montana, together with a score of his underlings, Thomas J. Dimsdale, school teacher and newspaper editor of Virginia City, had already gathered together and assembled "the correct and impartial narrative of the chase, trial, capture and execution of Henry Plummer's Road Agent Band, together with the accounts of the lives and crimes of many of the robbers and desperadoes, the whole being interspersed

with sketches of life in the mining camps of the Far West; forming the only reliable work on the subject ever offered to the public."

The value of Dimsdale's work lies in the fact that the volume—at first a series of articles for his own paper, *The Montana Post*—is exactly what it purports to be. Truth than fiction is ever stranger, and no glorified romance of the old west has ever succeeded in echoing like authenticity. What we have in *The Vigilantes* is the statement of fact before it becomes fiction, the unadorned moment in history before hearsay, the folk imagination, and the teller of tales weaves it into saga. Henry Plummer is no Billy the Kid, not in Dimsdale's version; he is merely a gambler and highwayman, a robber and a murderer masquerading as a sheriff, the notorious and feared leader of as heartless and ruthless a gang of cutthroats as ever straddled their saddles in the old west. Dimsdale's flow of narrative is actually impeded by his desire for accuracy, by his concern for the proper sequence of events and the demonstrable fairness of the proceedings. The robberies and holdups, the shootings and miscarriage of justice, and even the actual execution of the criminals, strung up on the nearest branch by an outraged citizenry, are not made focal points of the narrative, exciting though they may be. They serve rather in Dimsdale's version as the backdrop, the stage setting, the cause and effect, of the real action: the organization of the vigilantes, their decision, momentous at the moment, to take upon themselves the offices of judge and jury, of prosecuting and defense attorney, their hesitation in usurping thus the power, though distorted, of the legal forces of law and order. It is this that makes the dramatic and exciting story, "surpassing the wildest imagination of any dime-novel writer" ring true in exactly the way the glorified romance never has.

The wild west was wild once, momentarily, at the exact sequence when the onrush of gold seekers outdistanced the onrushing frontier. It is not the fault of the early writers like Dimsdale that our westerns and dime-novels, augmented by the movies, glorified it into an epoch, or that more latterly under the aegis of the American breakfast food, radio and television are engaged into stretching it into an eternity. It does little good now to say that such a world never existed. Besides, it is untrue. What we have really forgotten is that there was much more to the full truth, and it is something of that full truth that Dimsdale gives us in this plain unvarnished tale of the rip-roaring days of the old west. Here is the story of the gold strikes and the placer mines, the stampede thither of ragtag and bobtail, the story of the incessant gambling, drinking, and "Sabbath breaking," of the "Hurdy-Gurdy," and "shebangs" or hide-outs of the road agents, a

whole series of holdups and robberies. Less spectacular, but equally basic is the account of the honest doubts and uncertainties in an Anglo-Saxon community about to abrogate its heritage of traditional justice: legal arrest, the necessity of facing the accused with the evidence of his crime, the right of the malefactor to be tried by his peers. In the glorified version, the outraged citizen simply whips out his gun and shoots his man down, to the applause of the bystanders (or more latterly the lookers-on.) In the real west, the execution of justice was not so simple a matter. "We often hear of the justice of the masses *in the long run*," Dimsdale writes, "but a man may get hung *in the short run*, or may escape the rope he has so remorselessly earned, which is, by a thousand chances to one, the more likely result of a mass trial. The chances of a just verdict being rendered is almost a nullity."

To suggest this, is to suggest how really valuable "The Western Frontier Library" may yet be in reclaiming our lost west. To understand our heritage is to understand the event as it occurred, its impact and impingement upon those within the circumstance. The after-the-fact, as we have come to know, is apt to be a long way after. The real interest for his own time, Dimsdale knew, did not lie in the horrific epic of "a hundred victims in the course of a year to a band of cutthroats and highwaymen," nor yet in the grisly story of stretching "a score of necks in less than two months by way of balancing the equation," to quote from E. DeGolyer's introduction to the present reprint. It lay in his own intention, to quote by contrast from the original preface, "to furnish a correct history of an organization administering justice without sanction of constitutional law; to prove not only the necessity for their action, but the equity of their proceedings."

Lawrence College
Appleton, Wisconsin

Howard W. Troyer

FOLK SPEECH

The Place Names of Franklin County, Missouri. By Robert L. Ramsay. (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Studies, XXVI, No. 3, 1954.) 55 pp. \$2.50.

The publication of Robert L. Ramsay's *Place Names of Franklin County, Missouri* marks the end of Professor Ramsay's contributions to American place name study. He died in December, 1953, while this study was still in manuscript.

Twenty-five years ago Professor Ramsay began the tremendous job of collecting on note cards all the information that could be found

about every place name in Missouri, obsolete and current. Much of the field work was done by his graduate students, eighteen of whom wrote master's theses on Missouri names. Two principal sources were used: (1) written records such as maps, post office lists, time tables, land records, and local newspapers, and (2) interviews with local residents. In addition to the eighteen unpublished theses, cards containing data on nearly forty thousand Missouri names are stored in the University of Missouri library. Trained in Germanic philology, Professor Ramsay applied to place name study the meticulous and rigorous methods of historical linguistics. His earliest monograph on Missouri names is still a handbook in onomastic investigation.

This material is of peculiar interest to students of folklore because the collections contain not only the verifiable facts about the names but also the laymen's beliefs about the origins and changes in names of natural and cultural features. Alongside dated records the student can find the fanciful tales told about names of mountains, rivers, towns, springs, gaps, mines, landings, parks, schools, and the like, some individual and original, others conventional and patterned.

Instead of compiling an annotated dictionary of Franklin County names, Professor Ramsay wrote a narrative and interpretative account, organized around types of origin. Thus he discusses names commemorating American heroes, borrowings from other states, American Indian names, the Spanish bequest, the German bequest, names from local personages, flora and fauna names, and other such groups, somewhat as George Stewart did in *Names on the Land*. Franklin County was selected because of its importance in the history of the state and because unusually fine-meshed field work had been done in this area.

This monograph is readable and informative, but it is valuable less for its substantive contribution than for its indication of the kind of material preserved in the Missouri collection for future students.

University of Alabama
University, Alabama

James B. McMillan

STUDIES IN MUSIC AND RECORDINGS

The Shuttle and the Cage. Ewan MacColl. (New York, The Hargail Press, 1954.) 28 pp., 40¢.

Personal Choice. Ewan MacColl. (New York, The Hargail Press, 1954.) 71 pp. 60¢.

Fourpence a Day and Other British Industrial Folk Songs. Ewan MacColl. (Stinson SLP 79, 1954.)

In 1922 Ogburn and Thomas compiled a remarkable list of 148 inventions and discoveries that were apparently made simultaneously

and independently. A. L. Kroeber in 1948 extended the list in a fascinating discussion of pattern florescences, and suggested that in such occurrences superpersonal forces were operative. A convergence of such forces seems to be at work at the present time in the matter of protest folksong, for, despite my long interest in this material, I cannot account for the sudden and general occupation with these songs. Several books and articles have been written in this country on our native protest material; Australia is beginning to collect her protest folksong, and lest anyone charge that the extrapersonal factor here is Communist subversion, a number of protest songs has recently been spirited out of Russia. Nor is the interest entirely academic; at the present writing the most popular song in America is the Kentucky protest lyric, "Sixteen Tons."

Surprisingly, England has lagged behind us in recognizing the importance of utilitarian folksong. Ewan MacColl's little books and his record are very nearly the first publication from England, and these are largely based on the pioneering work of A. L. Lloyd (*Come All Ye Bold Miners* and *The Singing Englishman*), to which the reader will have to go for historical and descriptive notes to these songs. Slim though these collections are (*The Shuttle and the Cage* contains words and music to 21 songs; *Personal Choice* has words and music to 50 songs, but most are conventional folksongs such as "The Keach in the Creel"). They are full of excellent songs, even though, as MacColl says, "There are no nightingales in these songs, no flowers—and the sun is rarely mentioned; their themes are work, poverty, hunger, and exploitation. They should be sung to the accompaniment of pneumatic drills and swinging hammers, they should be bawled above the hum of turbines and the clatter of looms, for they are songs of toil, anthems of the industrial age." Indeed, if these are a representative sampling, we will have to concede that England's protest singing is richer than our own. We have nothing in this field so genuinely poignant as "The Blantyre Explosion," and few as humorous as "Cosher Bailey's Engine," and certainly nothing so ironic as "The Wark o' the Weavers."

Even those who reject this material as folksong and those who dislike protest song for other reasons will find MacColl's *Fourpence a Day*, a recording of 11 songs, well worth the buying. MacColl is a unique singer of folksong; he has a fine Scots voice which is all the better for its lack of training. He has moreover the intelligence to adapt his vocal expression to the mood of the songs. In light of the foregoing commendation and MacColl's affection for the working class it grieves me to observe that this record brings with it technological unemployment. When Riverside enlarges MacColl's

offering in the next few months with 90 Child ballads, many of our semi-pro balladeers will be thrown out of work.

University of Denver
Denver 10, Colorado

John Greenway

The Life and Music of Béla Bartók. Halsey Stevens. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953). xviii plus 366 pp. 9 plates. \$7.50.

Béla Bartók is a twofold source of interest to folklorists. He was a leading scholar who explored the folk songs of Hungary and some neighboring countries with a thoroughness rarely paralleled in other areas, and in doing this he developed methods which have become a standard part of the heritage of ethno-musicology. But equally important is his use of folkloristic material in his original compositions, a practice already well established before Bartók's time, to which he also contributed new techniques and approaches. Stevens' book is devoted largely to Bartók the artist, less to Bartók the scholar. But since these two aspects can hardly be separated, the author wisely includes considerable material bearing on Bartók's folkloristic activity. About one hundred pages are strictly biographical, and here we find detailed descriptions of Bartók's collecting trips and field techniques, such as his insistence on direct intercourse and on living with his informants. His opinions of various theories of musical ethnography and his views of his own scholarship are well summarized. The studies are not reviewed systematically and critically, however, and here Stevens' book has left undone a task which is sorely needed in folklore—the evaluation of Bartók's contribution to musicology. But the author cannot be blamed for this omission since his title focuses the book on Bartók's music.

The second part of the book deals with the compositions, and here we find much illuminating commentary on Bartók's arrangements of folk songs and his use of stylistic elements of folk music. Especially useful is the bibliography of books and articles by Bartók, which reveals an amazingly large output, much of it unknown to Americans. It would be considered the product of a full life of research even aside from his original compositions. Bartók's unique artistic personality, the importance of his studies for his creative work and vice versa, are authoritatively and readably presented with frequent and full quotations of letters and documents.

Wayne University
Detroit, Michigan

Bruno Nettl

Bad Men and Heroes. Sung by Ed McCurdy, Jack Elliott, and Oscar Brand. (Elektra Records, 16.) 10" LP, \$3.50.

The Elektra LP disc, *Bad Men and Heroes*, not only makes pleasant listening, but is also a good item for every teacher of folksong to add to his library. This is not because the songs are fresh or the renditions unique, but largely because this recording is the most convenient packaging of the outlaw tradition on wax. The outlaw has long been a strange symbol of revolt and freedom to the downtrodden; here, some of the adventures ascribed by the folk to Robin Hood, Captain Kidd, Bold Turpin, Quantrell, Billy the Kid, Jesse James, Charles Guiteau, and even Jim Fisk are presented by three capable, sympathetic, and quite versatile singers. Except for the fact that the labor-man, like Joe Hill, is omitted, the various classifications of outlaw are pretty well described.

Many of the stories are repetitious. The Robin Hood formula in which the poor boy is driven to crime by the arrogance of the privileged, with bravado and daring "justly" robs only the rich to share their wealth with the poor, and is finally brought to his death through treachery lies behind most of the songs. But by offering such an excellent opportunity for the listener to compare variations, this repetition makes the record fascinating rather than dull. Along these lines, the text of "Pretty Boy Floyd" (sung by Oscar Brand) is the most graphic. The hero was one of the foulest murderers and bank robbers of Oklahoma's early '30's; the author is the incomparable Woody Guthrie. In the text the power of the Robin Hood formula, combining with Route 66 and all that, overwhelms widely known and documented facts on Floyd's career, so that Pretty Boy emerges as a wronged cavalier, a sort of St. Nicholas, and a very definite hero to the lower income brackets. Even though other points of view on crime are given: "it's too bad" ("Billy the Kid"); "I'm repentant" ("Charles Guiteau"); and so forth, one leaves the disc with Guthrie's incredible logic lingering in his ears,

You won't never see an outlaw
Drive a family from their home.

The waxing is good. McCurdy, Elliott, and Brand are capable performers. This record is an excellent buy.

Denison University
Granville, Ohio

Tristram P. Coffin

BRIEF NOTICES OF FOREIGN BOOKS

Nordisk folkeviseforskning siden 1800. Erik Dal (Copenhagen: J. H. Schultz [Universitets-Jubilaets danske Samfund, publikation 376], 1956.) xii + 448 pp.

The death of Professor Knut Liestøl in 1951 brought active ballad research in Scandinavia momentarily to an end. Indeed, except for the work of Professor Liestøl and his Danish colleague Haakon Grüner Nielsen, Scandinavian ballad scholarship had been slumbering for nearly half a century. But today it is undergoing a renaissance and is perhaps growing away from the conservative influence of Svend Grundtvig. Perhaps the most important sign of this renaissance is Erik Dal's book *Nordisk folkeviseforskning siden 1800* (Scandinavian Ballad Research since 1800). It is, at any rate, the most important book about ballads to come out of Scandinavia since 1915 when Liestøl published *Norske trollvisor og norrøne sogor*.

Concerning itself geographically with Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Sweden, Swedish-Finland, Norway, and Iceland and chronologically with the period beginning around the year 1800 and continuing to the present day, the book treats of all aspects of research connected with the ballad, and the word *ballad* is defined as "... the anonymous, as a rule epic song of few and simple meters, practically always with an *omkvaed* [a refrain at the end of a stanza: a burden] and sometimes also a *mellomkvaed* [an internal refrain, alternating with lines of the text], which arose in the Middle Ages but is known only through the records of the nobility from about 1550 and later on through the singing of peasants."

The definition of the word *ballad* here quoted in translation indicates the sole limitation of the book from an American's point of view. It is otherwise a definitive survey of all aspects of Scandinavian ballad scholarship. Divided into three major parts, the book first deals with definitions and limits the geographical area under consideration; the second chapter of Part I consists of a chronologically arranged bibliography of ballad books and editions Scandinavian in origin. Part II, which consists of fourteen chapters, discusses in a historico-geographic manner the folkloristic, literary, and musical research, and Part III (sixteen chapters) is a discussion of such ballad problems as the special Scandinavian types, the origin and migration of ballads, the ballad and dance, the creation and transmission of ballads, the music of the ballads, and the cataloguing of ballads.

What Gerould did for the English, Scottish, and American ballads, what Entwistle did for European ballads in general, this book does for Scandinavian ballads—and it does it more thoroughly. *Nordisk folkeviseforskning siden 1800* is a necessary tool for any ballad scholar.

Selma Nielsens Viser: Et repertoire af folkelig sange fra det 19. aarhundredes slutning. Edited by Niles Schiörring (Copenhagen: Danmarks folkeminder no. 66, 1956.) 187 pp.

A second book resulting from the renaissance of Scandinavian ballad scholarship is Niles Schiörring's edition of the ballad repertoire of Selma Nielsen.

Collections such as this are rare. Mrs. Nielsen (born Selma Nielsen on May 16, 1887, married to Lars Peter Henrik Nielsen in 1909, and discovered by Haakon Grüner Nielsen in 1921) contributed one hundred songs

to the Dansk Folkemindesamling. Were this collection the only thing known about Danish balladry, one would still have a fairly comprehensive picture of all types of ballads known in Denmark. Mrs. Nielsen's variants are full and comprehensive; moreover, the collection was made late enough in time to overcome the reluctance of ballad scholars to concern themselves with music—thus, for each song the tune is included.

Half of the songs in the volume were prepared for print by Mrs. Nielsen herself before her death in 1954. Niles Schiörring, who along with Erik Dal is responsible for editing the balance of the Grundtvig collection, took up where Mrs. Nielsen left off and in addition contributed careful notes referring principally to other published variants, sometimes adding also information about significant scholarly research about particular ballads. In addition, he carefully prepared the musical notations.

In time, perhaps, when the Grundtvig collection is finally published in its entirety, this volume will lose some importance as a record of some hitherto unpublished variants of Danish ballads. As a record, however, of the singing tradition of a single family, it will never lose its importance and it will always serve to remind us of the importance of particular families to the preservation of the lore of their communities.

Fra ei anna tid: Folkeminne fra Nordfjord. Louise Storm Borchgrevink (Oslo: Norsk Folkeminnelag No. 78, 1956.) 173 pp.

The Norsk Folkeminnelag series which had its auspicious beginning with Ivar Aasen's *Norske Minnestykke* many years ago and which numbers among the authors of its volumes such important scholars as Moltke Moe, Reidar Th. Christiansen, M.B. Landstad, Nils Lid, Svale Solheim, and Knut Liestøl (the principal names in Norwegian folklore scholarship) has frequently included among its authors people with no pretensions to scholarship. Indeed, many of its volumes are really simply the product of the informant himself and thus represent the folkloristic repertoire of an individual. Other volumes represent the folklore of particular areas; still others the folklore of a particular occupation or trade; and yet others deal with particular types of folklore. Many of these volumes of the latter sort are brought together by an individual who knows his community and who is more of a local historian than a folklorist. This frequently enhances rather than detracts from the value of the volumes, though it sometimes makes finding one's way through them difficult.

Fra ei anna tid, collected and edited by Louise Storm Borchgrevink, a student, is a representative collection of miscellaneous folklore and historical reminiscences from four parishes in the Nordfjord district of Norway. Hardly any aspect of folklore, except the true folktale, is missing. One might argue with the organization of the book, for its divisions are not mutually exclusive and certainly not based upon considerations of form, but one must be thankful for the picture it gives of the folklife "from another time."

151 pages of the 157 pages in the book which are devoted to textual materials (pages 158-167 are devoted to notes, 168-170 to a dialect word list, and 171-173 to various indices) consist principally of customs, beliefs, and superstitions organized on the basis of cultural development; on pages 152-155 may be found two folksongs—one of which is a ballad—eight proverbs, and a list of farm names. Such a balance between formal folklore and unformulated folklore suggests a dearth of tales and songs and emphasizes

the fact that if formal folklore is to be saved today, a definite attempt must be made to collect it. Surely if such material does not exist in so remote an area as Nordfjord, it will be difficult to find it anywhere.

Le Conte merveilleux comme sujet d'Etudes. Roger Pinon (Liege: Centre d'Education Populaire et de Culture, 1955.) 51 pp.

Although Roger Pinon begins the concluding chapter of *Le Conte merveilleux comme sujet d'Etudes* with the statement that "Cette brève étude n'a pas l'ambition d'avoir épuisé tous les problèmes que soulève le conte folklorique," he comes very close to at least mentioning—even if not exhausting—all of the problems which confront students of the folktale.

This booklet is not, of course, Stith Thompson's *The Folktale*. It is, rather, an introduction to the folktale lacking the detailed analysis and exempla which are found in Professor Thompson's book. *Le Conte merveilleux* describes folktales, differentiates them from other types of prose narrative, explains the various approaches to the study of folktales, mentions the scholars who uphold the particular points of view, and describes the advantages and shortcomings of the various approaches.

Especially for one who wishes to acquaint himself with the folktale and its study in a hurry, this book is invaluable. Its unbiased approach makes it a useful refresher even to one well acquainted with the subject.

Contes et Chansons folkloriques des Hautes-Alpes. Charles Joisten (Gap: Folklore des Alpes No. 1, 1956.) 95 pp.

Containing twenty-six tales (nine folktales, three animal tales, thirteen humorous anecdotes of the cycle of Jean Pallon, and one unclassified tale) and twenty-four folksongs (six ballads, one soldier's song, seven love songs, one song of marriage, one work song, three satirical songs, and five lullabies) this volume had inserted in it a statement to the effect that "Il est recommandé de ne pas mettre ce livre entre les mains des enfants, à cause de certains motifs d'un caractère réaliste qu'on a conservés pour respecter l'authenticité de ce recueil strictement scientifique." Few except children, however, would be shocked at anything in the book which is a straight-forward, careful transcription of the tales and songs—careful even to the point of transcribing dialectal peculiarities but translating them into modern, colloquial French in notes and in parallel texts.

Scholarly equipment has been kept to the minimum. Those tales which appear to be variants of Aarne-Thompson types are so classified. Variants of AT types 301B, 590, 313 (two versions), 333, 700, 650 (with intrusions from types 592, 1535, 1060, 1062, and 559), 559, 122, 123, 130 are included as well as tales found in the Delarue manuscripts. Dates of collecting; names, ages, and occupations of the informants; and brief comments upon the situation in which the tales and songs were collected are also noted. Insofar as the songs are concerned, similar information is given about the informants and references are made to other places in which the song has been printed. For only one song is the music printed, but the author is aware of this shortcoming and bases his apology for omitting the tunes on the impossibility of reproducing folkmusic adequately in so brief a space.

Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana

W. Edson Richmond